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RABELAIS

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RABELAIS

BY

WALTER BESANT, M.A.

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NOTE.

THE translations in the following chapters are in some cases my own; in others taken from Urquhart and Motteux, after comparison with the original.

W. B.

RABELAIS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE initial difficulty which presents itself to him who would treat of Rabelais, is that he must refrain from advising his readers, unless they are undertaking a serious study, to follow up his own account by reading the original. Alone among the great writers of the world, Rabelais can be appreciated by students only. To the general reader, to the young, to women in all ages, he is a closed book. For very shame he must be hidden away. His real features are only revealed to those who lift the veil with serious intent to study and not to laugh. To all others the man is a buffoon, and the book is what Voltaire called it in the early days before he understood it, "Un ramas des plus grossières ordures qu'un moine ivre puisse vomir."

Calvin, Luther, Stephen the Printer, La Bruyère, Fénélon, Lamartine, among other wise and learned men, found Rabelais insupportable and abominable. On the other hand, Cardinal Duperron called 'Pantagruel' "*le livre*;"

Bishop Huet annotated Rabelais in four different editions; Coleridge, Victor Hugo, Michelet, Kingsley—a whole chorus of noble voices has been raised in defence and praise of the man and his book. Almost every Frenchman who studies the literature of his own country finds it necessary to produce an essay on Rabelais; almost every French writer of these days endeavours to extenuate his faults and to magnify his name. Among these writers of our own age are Ste Beuve, Villemain, Philarète Chasles, Lenient, Prosper Merimée, Victor Hugo, Guizot, Michelet, Lacroix, and Jules Janin. No other author has been so repeatedly the subject of criticism. But on Rabelais, as on Shakespeare, the last word will never be said. No book on Rabelais has yet appeared, or ever will appear, that can be considered exhaustive.

It is the main object of the present volume to show by what qualities Rabelais has drawn to himself, and continues to draw, the praise and admiration of those who study him. In the preparation of the work I have consulted all those writers named above, and a good many more; and I have reconsidered every point of a previous judgment which I ventured to pronounce on Rabelais five years ago in my book on the French Humourists. I desire, however, especially to call the attention of those who require a more extended study on Rabelais than my limits will allow, to the book, in two volumes, of M. Jean Fleury (Paris: Didier, 1877). There are many points on which I cannot agree with M. Fleury in his conclusions, as, for instance, on the religious belief of Rabelais. But I must acknowledge my great obligations to the book, especially as to the "Voyage of the Divine Bottle." That part of the 'Pantagruel,'—the most important and the most

interesting—has never before, I think, been so clearly and so *sensibly* set forth. In fact, the great merit in M. Fleury's work is the common-sense, unencumbered with traditional rubbish, which he brings to bear upon the difficulties both of the book and the life.

An uncertainty, quite needless, as I believe, has been introduced into the life of Rabelais by a desire to make him out, at certain periods of his life, younger than he really was. Thus it has appeared to some that he must have been thirty instead of forty when he emerged from his convent; that for a grave physician of fifty, and a lecturer in the university, to act in a farce was unseeml*y*; he must therefore, they say, have been forty, not fifty. One fails to see how the unseemliness, if any, is removed by this curtailment of a decade, for surely it is as indecorous to play the fool at forty as at fifty. It is, as I hope to show presently, one of the most remarkable features in the life of Rabelais, that he was always young.

It is objected, again, that there are certain years of his life difficult to fill up. I cannot find these years. It is objected, farther, that according to the usual dates of their birth, the Du Bellay brothers, always said to have been his schoolfellows, would be eight or ten years younger. The usual dates, however, may be wrong, because no one could know the age of the Du Bellays better than Rabelais himself, and he distinctly states that the eldest, Guillaume, died in the year 1543, in the year of his grand climacteric—*l'an de son age le climactère*—that is, at sixty-three, which would make him, according to the usual date, just three years older than his *protégé*. There does not seem to me, indeed, the slightest reason for altering the date of Rabelais's birth. Colletet, Leroy,

and Bishop Huet collected their materials when his tomb was still standing with his name and age upon it. The second had access to the church register at Meudon. The Bishop visited Chinon, and got every scrap he could find bearing on the life. Rabelais, according to them all, was born in the year 1483.

CHAPTER I.

HIS LIFE.

"Mieulx est de ris qui de larmes escripre."
"Better it is to write of laughter than of tears."

FRANÇOIS RABELAIS was born in the town of Chinon, province of Touraine, in the year 1483, the same year in which Luther and Raphael saw the light. His father, who had a small estate or vineyard, called La Devinière, near the town, is said to have been an apothecary. Some, carried away by a sense of the fitness of things, and unable to see in the great writer anything but a *bon vivant*, say that his father kept a tavern. Fifty years after the death of Rabelais, De Thou, speaking of Chinon, mentions that his father's house had then become a tavern, and writes certain epigrammatic Latin verses, in which the shade of Rabelais congratulates himself on such a fate for the house in which he was born. The verses seem to prove—first, that the house had not before been a *cabaret;* and secondly, that the world was yet only in the first stage of understanding the character of Rabelais. The following is an imitation of the lines:—

"So did I live from youth to age,
In feast and wine, in mirth and song;
So did I write that every page
My lifelong banquet should prolong.

Bacchus my god: he, lest below,
These gloomy shades my faith should kill,
By trusty letters lets me know
What things his votaries compass still.'

Before my father's house, he says,
A tavern's pole and bush are spread,
To point whence mirth her song may raise,
Between the white wine and the red.

Where revellers still the feast prolong,
And laugh and sing from morn to night;
In my old chamber rings the song:
In my old garden dwells delight.

Each sings in turn his chansonette;
Outside let frigid prudence rest;
And here the dancers pirouette,
And here the piper pipes his best."

There seems to be little doubt of the authenticity of the house, which is still shown; and the chain of traditions which attaches it to the name of Rabelais is clearly complete from the time of De Thou. It stands at the corner of the Rue de la Lamproie, in the oldest part of the town, and is itself certainly the oldest house in the *quartier*. It is built of a yellowish-white stone quarried out of the rock behind, which supplied the stones of which the castle of Chinon itself was built. It has an old doorway now no longer used, the threshold of which is a foot and more below the present level of the street: there are

two or three old windows, and two modern ones: it is a house of two storeys, ground and first floor, with a large window, a double dormer, of later date, in the high-pitched roof. The Rue de la Lamproie in which it stands is an ancient and narrow street, little changed from the aspect which it must have presented four hundred years ago. Then, as now, the houses, built of stone, presented low projecting fronts over a narrow street of cobbled stones with a gutter down the middle. The open booths have since got glass fronts, it is true, but these stand open all day, so that the men and women who work and talk in them from morning till night, after the industrious manner of the French, may see and take part in what passes. Then, as now, the women at early day trudged in from the country bearing baskets of fruit, poultry, and eggs, bringing the breath of the fields into the close streets, wearing, perhaps, the same blue stuff and certainly the same close white cap: then, as now, sun-burnt boys with wooden *sabots* clattered over the stones, driving the pack-laden asses; the sad-faced sisters and nuns glided silently about the streets; and the burly monk from Seuilly, red-faced and heavy-lipped, lounged and laughed on his way to the tavern over which then, as now, the bush proclaimed the goodness of the wine. There was the open baker's shop, there was the same smell—an omnipresent smell composed of fried onions and other strong ingredients due to absence of drainage, —French folk are conservative, and slow to learn. Near the end of the street was the old church of St Etienne, with, outside, its carved double portal, and the crown above the fleur-de-lys, and, inside, the scattered figures of white-capped women, who in France maintain between

them a Perpetual Adoration. Lower down still was the old church of St Mexme, guardian saint of Chinon: its central tower and spire have fallen down, but the severe and plain west front with its two towers stand yet. The Rue de la Lamproie is, and probably always was, a street of small booths and workshops. The birthplace of Rabelais, however, is a corner house. The narrow street to which it also belongs contains white and trim hotels standing in their own gardens, kept secluded from intrusive gaze by high stone walls, so that the street has a sort of Moorish aspect. Here were then, as now, the residences of the better class, the *gens de la robe.*

As regards the situation of the town, no better could have been found to fill the brain of an imaginative child with food for delightful thought. It stands quiet now, and bereft of its former greatness, on the north bank of the swift and bright Vienne, some eight miles above its junction with the Loire. A long bridge connects it with a suburb on the opposite shore. Immediately behind the town rises a great rock three hundred feet high, on whose level summit stand the ruins of the splendid castle of Chinon, where our King Henry II. breathed his last, and where Charles the Dauphin received Joan of Arc. The grand old castle in the days when Rabelais was a boy was no longer a royal residence. Louis XI. preferred his manor-house of Plessis les Tours, standing in its marshy meadows. Charles VIII. loved the more commodious castle of Amboise. Francis I. chose to live at pretty Chenonceaux. But Chinon was maintained with garrison, governor, drawbridge, and moat, in all the discipline of a medieval fortress. No doubt the furniture and tapestry still remained in the long low saloon where the Wondrous

Maid discovered the prince. The zigzag way from the Place up to the castle still echoed with the iron heels of men-at-arms who clambered up or down; and knights with banner and gleam of armour still rode clattering up the steep incline which led to the tall narrow donjon. Splendid traditions of kings haunted the place itself. Great palaces and castles lay everywhere almost in sight of the castle of Chinon. The twin towers of Tours, the castles of Plessis, of Chaumont, Vendôme, Saumur, Langeais, Amboise, Chenonceaux, Blois, Chambord, lay all around, each with its history and associations of royal names. Besides the great castles there were also the manor-houses, those country retreats and lodges which good King René of Anjou loved to build, what time the long wars came to an end, and the generations which had been cooped up for a hundred years within stone walls came out, wondering, and grey-headed men learned for the first time the smell of a pine-wood, or listened bewildered to the rustle of the birches by the shallow Loire. Then there were the great monasteries — the cages of the *monagaux* (monk birds) — the cathedrals and the stately abbeys. Notable and before all was the Abbey of Fontévrault, in these modern days turned into a prison, where monks and nuns lived together within one wall, according to one rule, governed by an abbess, a lady of high degree. Or to the boy François, when he wandered down the road which led from Chinon to Saumur, what things to see, what things to remember, what things to fire the imagination! First, vineyards everywhere, save where the low marshy meadows by the river would grow nothing but osiers, reeds, tall grass, meadow-sweet, wild rose, hollyhock, and foxglove; among these stood

white birches, rustling poplars, and acacias. Beyond the meadows ran the river, broad and shining, a silent highway which bore on its bosom many a barge laden with wine of Saumur, Bourgueil, and Vouvray—flat-bottomed barges with rudders twelve feet long. All along the left of the road, where the low cliff rises perpendicular from the fields, people then, as now, made homes for themselves in the quarried rock, and lived like Horites in the caves, a thing of itself for a boy to dream about. On the white road the sunburnt women drove the cows and geese; the women tended the vines, the women weeded the fields, and in shady corners at noontide the women sat together, ate their bread, and talked. If they had their little ones with them, perhaps they talked of great Gargantua, how he set up a stone at Poitiers, and another—a *pierre couverte*—at Saumur; with that story of the cathedral bells, and how he hung them round the neck of his mare in sport.

Then the boy would meet the children on his way, carrying yard-long loaves in tiny arms: he would mark shady lanes leading straight out of the white road into impenetrable blackness of what seemed a deep forest, but was only a clump of trees: on the walls by the roadside the pink-and-white stonecrop, thirsty and dry: poppies too, instead of wallflowers. Here and there flat stretches of sand, like a sea-shore, when the Loire was low: on the sand the women spreading out the clothes to dry. Everywhere bundles of fagots tied up for the women to carry home by strings of pack-horses. Now and then a covered cart, the home of a family with brown skins and bright black eyes, all at work on the grass making baskets out of the osiers. Fishing-boats on the river

with broad brown sail. Here a cottage of white stone under great walnut-trees; and here a village with its old church, and above the portal its row of carven saints.

On the way, at the town of Candé, Montsoreau, or Saumur, the boy would find a tavern, where a motley group were gathered together to drink, sing, and gasconade. There the burly monk, the jolly *curé*, the bailiff, the clerk, the soldier, the farmer, and the merchant, sitting together beneath the trees in the shade outside the house poured down the strong good wine of the country without stint or measure, and talked the while. Beside them, the boy—a boy with large eyes and broad forehead—stood silent, delighted, listening,—he was a boy who was one day to make all immortal,—to the gossip and stories of the drinkers, the chattering of the women, the merriment and careless happiness of the whole.

They put him into the cloister so young, this poor boy, that his memories were arrested at that point: he saw only what a child sees, the outward show, where everything is what it seems to be: he had acquired as yet none of that sympathy which grows up so easily in the minds of those who live among their fellows. What came to him later was of another kind. Let us remember that.

The things he saw as a boy remained in his brain. He fed on them during the long years of monkery. When, forty years later, he began to write, it was of Touraine and the Tourangeaux. He described, with the pen of a man, what remained in his memory from the impressions of a child. This, too, may be remembered.

Rabelais, then, belongs to that part of France which is the most fertile and the richest in the country. He comes

from a land of plenty, where the wine is generous and abundant, where the fruits are like the seeds of the wayside grass for cheapness.

And he was born in a country rich in associations, especially of kings, in traditions and legends, especially of giants, in great castles and cathedrals, and proud of its strong, healthy, and well-to-do race.

There were, it is said, five sons, François being the youngest. There were no daughters. Of the four elder brothers we know nothing. Probably one or more died young, victims to the close and unhealthy air of the crowded town, and probably one at least survived to take over the paternal estate, or the youngest would not have been sent to a monastery. The name of Rabelais has long since vanished out of the place. In 1687, Bishop Huet, annotator of Rabelais, found an old woman of the name still living at Bourgueil, a town ten miles from Chinon; and he heard a tradition in the city of Chinon that the last male representative of the family, an apothecary, had died in the greatest poverty.

We learn little from Rabelais himself about his family. He mentions his father, and, in his extravagant fashion, he sings the praises of Chinon. He gives no hint of mother, brother, sister, or of that wide circle of cousinship and fringe of early connections and friendships by which men's lives overlap each other, so that they feel less lonely. This is the result of the convent. So far as we can learn from his book Rabelais was alone in the world save for the scholars, his friends, who might, at any moment of rivalry, become the scholars, his enemies. There is even one passage in which he may be supposed to speak in bitterness of his own mother. "For

mothers," he says, "who cannot bear to keep their children about the house more than nine, or, still oftener, seven years, by only putting a shirt over their frocks and cutting off a little hair from the crown of their heads, and saying certain magical and expiatory words, transform them into birds" — meaning that they get them off their hands as early as possible, and put them into monasteries.

Was it only for nine years that the little François had the enjoyment of free air and the fields? One could hope it was for longer. It seems as if he would not have remembered so much after so short a space.

They sent him, in the first place, to the convent at Seuilly, near his father's estate. Beneath the shadow of the great castle of Coudray-Montpensier, the ruins of the convent may still be seen. Here his education began.

It has been pointed out, and needlessly insisted on, that Rabelais was born at the very high tide of the Renaissance,—that he was a child of that greatly hopeful time when the discovery of a new world, of a new learning, of new thoughts, opened up endless vistas of happy and glad forelooking. It is only true so far as dates go. Little, indeed, of the tide of new learning had reached in the last decade of the fifteenth century the remote convent of Seuilly. Little did they know, in the Rue de la Lamproie, of Greek scholars, Latinists, Humanists, the invention of printing, the changes which were to come. Rabelais went as a boy into the darkness of his cell full of the old-world prejudices, ideas, and traditions, and came out of it after many years of twilight into a sunshine which dazzled him. So that another thing to be remembered about this man is, that he never understood, in conse-

quence of his long cloistership, the proportions, the possibilities, and the limitations of the new forces. That was why Luther and Calvin, who seemed angry, with cause, were in fact ignorantly impatient with him.

One would like to know more about this first school, what the boy learned, whether he was already tonsured, with the "white shirt over his frock." We have absolutely no information about the length of time spent at Seuilly, or his age when he was removed from Seuilly and sent to the convent of La Baumette, near Angers. This was one of the foundations of that great and much misrepresented prince, René of Anjou, who instituted it in 1464 for the purpose of providing an education on more liberal and intelligent principles than those venerable methods whose dethronement was so near.

It was at La Baumette that the education of Rabelais really commenced. It would be pleasant to learn something of those early days spent in the convent close to the walls of black Angers. The town is now larger than Chinon, still preserving its ancient narrow streets and crowded houses. There is the castle, an irregular octagon, standing beside the river. Behind it, on a hill, is the cathedral, and, in those days, there were, round all, the black walls. There, as at Chinon, associations of royalty and majesty clung about the place; but, as there, the splendour of a court had passed away. King René's gardens, his menagerie, his fish-ponds, his painted galleries, his studios, were things of the past, but still remembered and talked about by men not yet beyond middle age.

It was at the close of the fifteenth century. The boy knew nothing of the changes that were to come, in which

he was himself to play so great a part. The press was at work in Paris; already Budé was learning and teaching Greek; already Lefèvre d'Etaples was at work on his French version of the Bible; already the trees were full-grown which were to furnish the stakes for martyrs; everywhere was the restlessness which comes before great movements—the timid were anxious, the daring were asking questions.

How did Rabelais get his enthusiasm for knowledge? Some stories, doubtless, of the outer world penetrated to La Baumette. Perhaps among the brothers who taught were some who had caught the spirit of their founder, René, and were open to the influence of the time. The very sight of the printed books may have been a stimulus; the reading of Cicero may have been a revelation.

The boy was in good company at the school. Among the scholars were three of the illustrious Du Bellay brothers—William, afterwards general, ambassador, and statesman, whom Rabelais never tires of praising;[1] Jean, afterwards cardinal; and Martin, afterwards bishop. Another scholar was Geoffroy d'Estissac, the son of a noble family of the Pays d'Aunis, who became in 1518 Bishop of Maillezais. These school friendships were maintained in after-life, to the great profit of Rabelais.

The time of study at La Baumette came at length to an end, and Rabelais had to make choice—such choice as

[1] The biographies give the date of William's birth 1491, which furnishes, as stated in the preface, an argument for those who place the birth of Rabelais ten years later than the traditional date. But the biographers have followed Brantôme. Rabelais, who most certainly knew, says that William died in the year 1543, "in the climacteric year of his age"—that is, at 63, which gives his birth in 1480.

was in his power—of a future. The career of an ecclesiastic was the only one open to him. That had been settled without his consent long before. In those days a boy's *métier* was decided for him very early in life. Indeed, there was little choice. The calling of the father must be that of the son, unless he preferred the one profession—of the Church—which always remained open. There were, to be sure, melancholy examples of independence, like those of Villon and his friends, of men who refused to follow in the beaten track. Mostly, their bodies were visible for many years, hanging on the gibbet of Montmartre, a lesson plain for all to read.

So, at some date which is uncertain, young Rabelais left the convent of La Baumette, and decided to become a cordelier, a Franciscan monk, at Fontenay-le-Comte in Poitou.

What made him become a Franciscan, a member of that order which held all learning in suspicion, and, above all, the new learning? The Benedictines honoured scholars; why did he not enter that order? But the Grey Friars, *fratres minores*, the brotherhood which had grown to consider ignorance as great a virtue as poverty, what demon led the youth to become their prey? It was, too, an unlucky time; monks were growing suspicious; rumours were afloat; the first symptoms of the great Revolt were already appearing: with the new ideas had come their nurse and foster-mother, the study of the Greek language. A scholar was already looked upon as a heretic—a favourer of the new learning as one who favoured the new ideas.

As Dolet wrote, in Latin verse: "Should any dare to profess a knowledge of Greek, that wretch will be

esteemed by the judgment of the people next to a heretic, or even worse."

The battle of prejudice against learning, always, in some form or other, going on in the world, was just then raging with extraordinary violence. On the one side stood the little band of Greek and Hebrew scholars; on the other, the rest of mankind, represented and headed by the Franciscan monks. Why, asked the grey frocks, does a man wish to read the Scriptures in their original tongue, except to find weapons with which to attack the authority of the Church? Were there not plenty of examples to prove the fact of such intention? Lefèvre d'Etaples, for instance, who translated the Gospels —most mischievously—into French; Farel, his disciple; Gerald Roussel, Briçonnet,—all notorious favourers of the new opinions? Was there not Jean de Caturce of Toulouse, whom they had got, very happily, burned? Were there not Dolet, Desperiers, Erasmus, Luther the Antichrist, and even, though he professed orthodoxy so loudly, the great French scholar, Budé himself?

For some unknown reason, then, Rabelais left Angers and the *riant* country of Anjou and Touraine for the barren heaths and marshy flats of La Vendée. It is possible that he was induced to go there by his friend Geoffroy d'Estissac, afterwards Bishop of Maillezais. In the convent, there grew up in the mind of the young monk a dangerous ambition. He, too, would make himself one of those colossal scholars who, like Budé or Scaliger, knew everything. He, too, would be an encyclopædia of learning. By him, as by these great repositories of knowledge, nothing in the shape of literature or learning was to be neglected. They did not as yet under-

stand the art of special research; they would know and grasp all, just as Roger Bacon, Brunetto Latini, and Jean de Meung, of the thirteenth century, knew all. Encyclopædic pretension was a medieval absurdity; and yet, while it survived, during the next two centuries, it produced astonishing results.

Fortunately Rabelais had access to books—one does not know how—and found one or two congenial brethren, who joined in his studies, and encouraged him in the ardour of learning. He read all that he could find to read—Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, French of his own times, French of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Romance of the Rose, romances of chivalry, books of medicine, botany, astronomy, mathematics—everything. His principal friend and colleague in study was one Pierre Amy, a brother monk. Two others, named Ardillon and Finet, participated in their pursuits. Outside the convent, and in the town, Rabelais had the good fortune to become a friend of André Tiraqueau, lieutenant-general in the bailiwick of Fontenay-le-Comte. Rabelais calls him "the good, the learned, the wise, the humane, the gallant, and the equitable André Tiraqueau." He was one of the greatest lawyers of his time, and a most voluminous writer. As he was also the father of a numerous family, it was said that he presented the world with a book and a child every year. It is not stated which was the more useful gift. Bouchet, another writer on jurisprudence, also took up his quarters at Fontenay in order to be near his enemy and friend Tiraqueau, with whom he kept up a continual controversy in Latin, *de legibus connubialibus*. And, in the course of years, his friend Geoffroy d'Estissac became Bishop of Maillezais; and when

he was not at Ligugé, lived in his chateau of Ermenaud, close to Fontenay-le-Comte.

About the convent life we know nothing, except that he had these friends, that he studied, and that he proceeded in regular course to priest's orders. The collectors of idle stories who formerly wreaked their foolish will on the life of Rabelais crowd these years with inexpressible silliness. He was a mere purposeless buffoon, a "sayer of good things," a player of idle practical jokes, this indefatigable and continual student. Doubtless Rabelais was at all periods of his life a cheerful and even a mirthful companion; outside the walls, with Tiraqueau and Bouchet, he was able to lay aside his books, to forget the chanting of masses, and to give full play over the wine which he loved to the Tourangeau gaiety which was his birthright. The unanimous voice of tradition, the general love of his friends, the ready hospitality which he ever received, the patronage and protection of men so entirely different as the Cardinals of Guise, Chatillon, and Du Bellay, Guillaume du Bellay, André Tiraqueau, and Bishop Geoffroy d'Estissac, all confirm the tradition that he was an excellent companion and talker, and no doubt a *bon vivant*. His latest and best biographer, M. Fleury, endeavours, by comparison with other humorists, to prove that Rabelais was of grave character. But his comparison does not hold. All the writers whom he adduces—Lucian, Cervantes, Molière, Beranger, Courier, —were every one artists. Rabelais alone pays no attention to style. He writes as he must have talked; the laugh is in the page, as in his voice: what he gives the world is not a laboured essay, but the free and spontaneous flow of his own ideas. That copious stream of illus-

tration, anecdote, and quotation which runs throughout 'Pantagruel' came from a full mind, a ready tongue, and a mirthful heart. I, for one, will not surrender the mirthfulness of Rabelais.

As a first outcome of his labours, and on feeling his own powers and acquirements, Rabelais aspired to be considered a Fellow of that little college of scholars, the members of which continually wrote to each other letters of exhortation, of inquiry, and of friendship. Pierre Amy was already a correspondent of the illustrious scholar Budé, with whom Rabelais also endeavoured to enter into communication. For some time his efforts were unsuccessful. At length, however, he succeeded in getting a letter in a mixture of Greek and Latin from the great scholar. Rabelais had threatened, in jest, to bring an action, *pro dolo malo*, against Amy, for pretending to an amount of credit with Budé which he did not possess. Budé replies to him in the same tone, pointing out that his pleas will be void in law. Then he becomes serious, and says, "You are astonished, like a young man who doubts nothing, that I have made no answer to your appeal, and you take fire, thinking yourself despised by me. But should you not first have assured yourself that your grievance was real? Should you not have learned that illness or pressing business had prevented me?"

In fact, Budé was busy in 1520, when this letter was written, in describing the Field of the Cloth of Gold. After this, however, he always names Rabelais in his letters to Amy. "Salute Rabelais, your brother in learning and religion, in my name." When the troubles began with the ignorant friars, Budé breaks out into passionate indignation. "What news is this that has

come to me? I learn that you and Rabelais, your Pylades, in consequence of your zeal for the Greek language, are vexed and annoyed in a thousand ways by the brothers, sworn enemies of literature and elegance. O fatal madness! We had already learned and witnessed with our own eyes some proofs of their insensate fury; we knew that they had attacked ourselves, as the chief of those who have been seized with the ardour of Hellenism, and that they had sworn to annihilate the cult of Greek letters restored some time since to the eternal honour of our time." And to Rabelais he says, "I received the news from one of the most enlightened and human of your brethren, that they had restored you your books, your only joy, which they had arbitrarily confiscated, and that you had again received your liberty and your former tranquillity."

Among the books thus seized and thus restored were probably those for which the receipt still exists—for an Aristotle, a Homer, a Cicero, and other works sold by Henry Stephen to Pierre Amy in 1519.

There was, then, a persecution of some kind. By the interference of powerful friends—no doubt, Tiraqueau was one—the two students who had been imprisoned and deprived of their books were released. It was in 1523. In 1524 Rabelais was out of the convent.

We may pass over all the stories which have been told about his escape from the convent, and the tricks by which he outraged his brother monks. These silly tales are confuted, if by nothing else, by the fact that all this time Rabelais, with limited access to books, was painfully and laboriously acquiring knowledge. He was, besides, a priest and a preacher. How could such a man

be a mere monkey, rejoicing in monkey tricks? We may, at the same time, consider the story that he was put into an *in pace* cell—that is, immured for life on bread and water—as unworthy of credit. What seems perfectly simple and easy to believe is that, after Amy and Rabelais got back their books and their comparative freedom, a great disgust fell upon both. The abbey and the monks; the constant tolling of the bell; the wearisome recurrence of the services; the stupid talk of the brethren; the dreadful monotony of the future; the absolute futility of the life; the penances; the punishments for petty breaches of discipline,—all these things became intolerable. They would bear them no longer. One day, talking over their troubles, they opened a Virgil at random, and fell upon the line—

"Heu! fuge crudeles terras, fuge littus avarum!"

Of all the *sortes Virgilianæ* which Rabelais has elsewhere recorded, this was the most sensible and most to the point. They took the friendly advice, and they ran away. Nobody has ever inquired, so far as I know, whither Amy ran, or what became of him. One hopes he found a refuge somewhere, and a shelf on which to place his Homer and his Aristotle.

Once outside the convent, Rabelais steps into the light of day. Henceforth there is little further difficulty about the details of his life. He was in 1524 in his forty-first year. He had been under monastic discipline for about thirty years. He knew next to nothing of the outer world. Save for his schoolboy memories of La Baumette, Angers, and Chinon, he had seen no other town than Fontenay-le-Comte. All the experience which an ordi-

nary man acquires before five-and-twenty he had yet to learn. Meantime he could have for the moment but one thought, to get rid of his grey frock and that cordelier's rope with the three knots, and to escape from the *Ile Sonnante*, the Island of Bells. This he managed by the help of his friend D'Estissac, who obtained permission for him to pass into the Benedictine convent of Maillezais,—a permission which Rabelais interpreted to mean, authority to keep outside a Franciscan convent. But the rules, the long years of discipline, the multiplication of services, were like so many cruel fetters, the iron of which entered into his very soul and made wounds which never healed, so that for the rest of his life he was fain to cry out continually against the hypocrisy, the unreality, the detestable stupidity of monkery. In *l'Ile Sonnante*, as we shall presently see, there were nothing but cages full of birds—*monagaux*, monk-birds—red, white, grey, black, or black and white, which are perpetually singing. "Why," asks Panurge, "do they sing?" Their guide, Ædituus, tells how that they are made to sing by the bells hanging over their cages. "Would you like me," he says, "to make these *monagaux*, that you see there with hoods like bags for filtering hypocras, sing like so many wild larks?" Then he rang the bell six times only, and the *monagaux* began to sing. "And if," says Panurge, "I ring this bell, shall I in the same way make those birds with the red-herring-coloured plumage sing?" "Just the same," said Ædituus. Panurge rang, and immediately the birds ran together and began to sing, but their voices were hoarse and displeasing.

Now at length he was free. The 'damnable iteration' of the bells would call him no more from the quiet of his

cell to the grunting of a wearisome and heartless service. He could throw off his hood and look round him.

Consider, he had not yet lived at all. He had had no youth; the world was all fresh to him. Other men of his age had lived, enjoyed, and were grown sated with the pleasures of life; this young fellow of forty was like some girl emerging from her convent, as ignorant of men, save for some chance echoes which might beat upon his ear in his cell at far-off Fontenay, or some glimpses of country life seen in the streets of the little town. Other men of forty had tried, proved, and found their own weakness and their strength. Rabelais was still untried. He knew not as yet what his strength was. He was a man of forty with the diffidence, the vague aspirations, the credulity, the hope, and the confidence of twenty. Outside a convent, he felt sure, all men must be good. In other dress than grey frock and three-knotted ropes, all hearts must be sound.

And here begins the happiest time in his life—the six years of uninterrupted freedom, leisurely study, and enjoyment; those years of which the too credulous De Thou says—"Abandoning every serious pursuit, he gave himself up entirely to a dissolute and self-indulgent life." They were spent partly in the courtly and cultivated residence of D'Estissac, at Ligugé, near Poitiers. Bouchet, in a letter to Rabelais, speaks with pedantic enthusiasm of the spot where "the Naiads sport beside the river in the green meadows, and beside them the wood nymphs, the Dryads—and the mountain nymphs, the Oreades."

Rabelais answers Bouchet in similar strain, saying that he writes to him from his bed in his little room at Ligugé.

It is impossible to say how long he stayed under the roof of the good bishop. There was a great deal for this emancipated schoolboy of forty to see and to do during the next six years. He had to visit his old friends, the Du Bellay brothers. It was very likely at this time that he collected the materials for a history in Latin of the 'Ruses de Guerre' of Guillaume du Bellay. He accepted, according to tradition—but Rathery and Colletet are silent on the subject—the little village living of Souday, near Guillaume du Bellay's chateau of Langey, in Le Perche. Probably here he made the acquaintance of Marot, and at this time he qualified himself somehow for that intimate knowledge of the universities of France, which he afterwards showed in 'Pantagruel.' Marot's acquaintance was formed before 1532, because a sonnet is addressed to Rabelais in a volume of verses published by Marot in that year. Now, between 1527 and 1532, Marot was either in Paris, or with the Queen of Navarre in the Duchy of Berry, or at his native place of Cahors-en-Quercy. Where did Rabelais meet him? It must have been either at Bourges or in Paris itself, and there seems nothing unreasonable in the supposition that Rabelais was hearing lectures or profiting by the libraries of the University of Bourges and of Paris. The sonnet is in Marot's happiest style, imitated from Martial, and breathing that easy epicureanism which, with a hatred of clerical bigotry, was all that the two had in common.

"Could we, my friend, dispose our days at will,
And catch the present moment and its sport;
Could we live, as we ought, in freedom still,
No palace would we haunt, attend no court,

Would bid farewell to mansions, nobles, suits,
With all their splendour and their blazoned arms,
And find in cloistered shade the world's best fruits,
In books and learned talk the world's best charms.
Love should be there, with ladies fair and sweet,
And full content, to bless our fond retreat."

These six years, about which some writers on Rabelais find so much difficulty, seem to me, therefore, very completely filled up. His studies during this time appear to have been chiefly in the direction of botany and medicine. In 1530, being then in the forty-seventh year of his age, but only the sixth of his freedom, the ex-Cordelier resolved on entering into a new profession. He, who was already a scholar acknowledged among the scholars of his own country, would also be a physician. The registers of Montpellier for that century can still be consulted to show that "Franciscus Rabelæsus, Diocesis Turonensis, solvit die 17 Septembris 1530, unum aureum." After this follows the usual student's declaration of obedience, signed by himself. There is no mention made of priests' orders, or of his Benedictine obligations.

At forty-seven, *juvenis inter juvenes*, he proposed to begin, not a new study, but the systematic course of a professional student. How many are there among us who feel sufficient elasticity even at thirty to enter upon a new study?

The prescribed course on which Rabelais thus entered consisted, for ordinary students, after a preliminary examination to show knowledge of logic and of philosophy, of three years' attendance at lectures. This was followed by the Bachelor's degree granted after examination. Three

months after the Bachelor's degree, application could be made for a licence to practise. Before this was conferred, four theses had to be held, two on each of two consecutive days, and, eight days afterwards, two more theses. The licence was then solemnly conferred by the Bishop or Vicar-General, the candidate being accompanied by two professors. The Doctor's degree, called "l'acte de triomphe," could only be obtained by passing another and much more difficult examination, called the "Triduanes," which consisted of examinations in six subjects, and lasted for three days. If the candidate satisfied two-thirds of the professors, he was admitted to the Doctor's degree. The conferring of this degree was conducted with much state and ceremony. The recipient, accompanied by his sponsor (an officer corresponding to the "Father of the College" at Cambridge), and followed by the whole body of the university, marched in procession with bands of music to the church of St Firmin, the bells of which were set ringing. Here, after complimentary harangues in Latin, the new doctor received his red robe, his bonnet of black cloth covered with a *houppe* of crimson silk, a gold ring, and a gilt belt. He was also presented with a copy of the works of Hippocrates. The ceremony concluded by the new doctor distributing sweetmeats, gloves, and preserved fruits.

In the case of Rabelais a remarkable exception was made: he was allowed to dispense with the whole undergraduate course, and received his Bachelor's degree two months after entering. Immediately afterwards he began to lecture on the Aphorisms of Hippocrates and on Galen. This fact, which is recorded in the registers of the university, proves not only knowledge but reputa-

tion. Other memorials of Rabelais in the Montpellier registers show us that he left the place in 1532 and came back in 1537 to get his Doctor's degree, and that he lectured in the same year on the Prognostics of Hippocrates from the Greek, not the Latin version. His name appears as having been present at certain feasts, at dissections, and at university Functions. It is found for the last time in the beginning of the year 1538. The university possesses in its library one book which belonged to him, and has his autograph. The robe which is shown as that of Rabelais has been, unfortunately, renewed twice at least, in 1612 and 1720, and probably very much oftener. Before the former date, every student used to cut off a piece as a memorial of Rabelais, so that, although each of those memorials was small, the whole gown, in the natural course of things, gradually disappeared.

It is certain that this student, who graduated in two months, entered with spirit and enjoyment into the life of the place. He recurs to it in after-years, laughing over a farce of which we may very well suppose him to have been the author: at all events he was one of the actors. Those who object to a man of fifty playing low comedy on a stage, might with equal justice object to a man of forty, one of the teachers of the university, doing the same thing. But Rabelais had not the modern ideas of personal dignity. To laugh and to make laugh in due season was his delight. Personal dignity in the sixteenth century was principally a matter of birth and rank. No one, for instance, would have expected Coligny or Guillaume du Bellay to act in a farce.

A curious parallel to this degree of Bachelor in Medi-

cine taken by a priest of the age of fifty may be found in the roll of our own Royal College of Physicians. It appears that the physician first named in the letters patent constituting the College, John Chambre, was a priest before he graduated in physic at Padua: that Linacre, on the other hand, was a physician before he was a priest, and that he was ordained at fifty. No one, on that account, has tried to make him ten years younger. One is not prepared to assert that the same association of the two faculties of medicine and divinity was as common in France as in England and Italy, but it is clear that the practice of ordaining a physician or granting a medical licence to a priest was not unknown in France. Certain restrictions were imposed on tonsured physicians: they were not to apply fire or to let blood.

There are several portraits of Rabelais, all belonging to this, the middle period of life, and yet, in a sense, his youth. One naturally mistrusts them all. Yet there is one *effigies* which seems probable, figured in Gordon's collection of all that remains concerning Rabelais at Montpellier. He gives two. The one I mean represents an oval face, with square-cut beard, belonging to a man of fifty or so. The eyes are set wide apart, the nose is broad, the lips are full, the forehead is square—the geometrical, not the analytical forehead, which, as mathematicians know, is high and narrow. The shoulders, which seem out of keeping with the head, are narrow and sloping—one suspects they were carelessly drawn—but the face is such, one feels certain, as Rabelais might, *must* have had. The eyes twinkle with humour, the nostrils are sensitive, the lips are mobile; the features belong to a man of full and strong nature: it is not the

face of an ascetic or a dreamer; it belongs to a man who could never feël any sympathy with theological speculation, with religious mysticism, or with unpractical philosophy. There is another so-called portrait in the Chateau de Chenonceaux, honourably hung between the heads of Francis I. and Charles VIII. It is also an oval face, with a very thin beard growing like a fringe at the back of the chin. If it is, which I am loath to believe, the face of Rabelais, the likeness must have been snatched in an ignoble moment while the man was laughing at some unsavoury joke. Well, there are things in his book which cannot be denied. It *may* be a portrait of Rabelais, though one prefers to think it a study of a clown laughing, labelled, by a painter who could only understand the animal nature which Rabelais displays so freely, with the name of the Master.

It was during his residence at Montpellier that Rabelais, no doubt for botanical and medicinal reasons, paid those visits to the Iles d'Hyères, in virtue of which he assumed the title of "Caloïer des Iles d'Hyères," a title which he takes at the head of his "Gargantua." He speaks of these islets with a sort of affection—"my islands, the Hyères, my Stœchades." It was also during this residence at Montpellier that Rabelais made a grand discovery—one which rejoiced his heart as a Frenchman, a *bon vivant*, and a scholar. He found, or thought he found, in a small fish of the anchovy kind, caught off the south shores of France, the *garus*, of which the celebrated fish-sauce, the *garum*, was anciently made. He even reconstructed this sauce for himself—one suspects it must have been extremely nasty—and sent a bottle to his friend Dolet, with a Latin epigram. Dolet answered

with other Latin verses, in which he promises that Marot shall be celebrated for this ancient discovery:—

"Now from our heart
Let Marot's name resound in grateful verse,
When this new flavour, delicate and spiced,
The palate pleases and the stomach soothes."

It is impossible to pass over the Montpellier period without reference to the tradition, which seems to date from the very age of Rabelais, of his visit to the Chancellor Duprat. We shall see presently how Panurge presents himself to Pantagruel speaking thirteen different languages. *Mutato nomine*, the same story is told of Rabelais:—

"Being at Paris," says the author of 'Particularitez de la Vie de Rabelais,' "and desiring to see the Chancellor, and not being able to obtain an interview, Rabelais put on a green robe and grey beard, and set himself to walk up and down before the Chancellor's door, which was on the Quai des Augustins, so that numbers of people, including the servants of the Chancellor, asked him who he was and what was his business. To all inquiries he replied that he was a calf-skinner, and that those who wished to be skinned had better make haste and present themselves.

"The Chancellor, hearing of this foolery, ordered his people to bring the madman to him at the dinner-hour. The fool being introduced, spoke so learnedly on the privileges and liberties of the University of Montpellier that the Chancellor placed him at his table, made him take dinner with himself, and agreed to respect the ancient privileges."

This original version of the story, which may be true, but which is most probably spurious, has been amplified by later writers. We are told by them that Rabelais, on being invited by the pages to see the Chancellor, replied,

first in Latin, then in Greek, Spanish, Italian, German, English, Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldean, Basque, and so on, running through the whole known list of Babel until he came to French itself; after which, the Chancellor, recognising the genius of the stranger, accorded to him all the liberties and privileges of Montpellier. Unfortunately for the story, there is nothing extant to prove that these liberties were ever menaced.

In 1532 Rabelais went to Lyons to publish his first work, 'Hippocratis et Galeni libri aliquot'—a book for the use of medical students, dedicated to his protector and patron, Geoffroy d'Estissac. It was at Lyons that the real work of his life began. From November 1532 to February 1534 he was physician at the Hospital of Lyons. But in that age of encyclopædic scholarship a man could not confine himself to one science only, and Rabelais speedily found himself distracted between medicine and scholarship.

The ancient city of Lyons was in the first half of the sixteenth century something like what Bordeaux had been in the fourth and Edinburgh was in the eighteenth. It was a provincial centre of intellectual life which rivalled, and in some degree outshone, the capital. At Lyons the great printer, Gryphe, set up his workshop. It was Gryphe who, in 1550, published the Latin Bible, —an edition remarkable, even in an age when printers' readers were scholars, for the fewness of the errors, as well as for the magnificence of the type. From this press, too, issued the great 'Commentaria Linguæ Latinæ' of Dolet, a two-volume folio of 1800 columns each, with but eight errata for the whole work. Three hundred works, more than enough to make a goodly list of a

great English publishing firm in the days when thousands of books are published every year, made up the works bearing the name of Gryphe. Round this great printer was gathered a society — the *Société Angélique* — of scholars and poets, which offered the noblest welcome and the largest liberality to a man of scholarship and of advanced opinions. That is to say, for a few years only the advanced opinions were accepted; for there very speedily came a time when those who dared to cherish ideas or hopes outside the lines of a stupid orthodoxy had to keep them unspoken and unwritten. It was during the very heyday of the *Société Angélique* of Lyons that Rabelais found himself in that city, and became one of the Club—almost the earliest literary association in France. It was among these men that he found and adopted the opinions which guided and ruled his after-life. What these were, we may gather from the opinions of the two most prominent, Dolet and Desperiers.

The former, Etienne Dolet, was an unfortunate scholar who ruined his whole career at the early age of twenty by attacking the ecclesiastics of Toulouse for the burning of Caturce. He had better have cut off his right hand. For the Church waited and watched for the opportunity, which came at last, when he could be handed over to the mercies of the secular arm. For seventeen years they watched for their chance, and, when it came, pounced upon their quarry and imprisoned him, tortured him with rack, dungeon, and suspense, and finally burned him. The one grace allowed was, that he should be strangled before burning, provided he would first say a prayer to the Virgin, which the poor man naturally con-

sented to do. That was not, however, until much later. In 1532 Dolet was working at his great book, and reading for Gryphe, being then only about twenty-three years of age, and twenty-seven years younger than Rabelais. It is presumed that his religious opinions were already fixed. They were those of the scholars. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the scholars of France at this time, like those of Italy two generations before, and most of their Italian contemporaries, entertained a sublime contempt, until they found themselves at the point of death, for Christianity. The Christian religion, to them, meant nothing more than the Roman ritual and the Roman discipline. When they speak of the immortality of the soul, they do not mean the immortality in which the Christian trusts; when they speak, as they often do,[1] of the senseless rest of death, they need not necessarily be assumed to be atheists. As a matter of fact, they were not atheists at all. They were haunted and possessed by the vague religious belief which is expounded in the first book of the 'Tusculan Disputations.' The teaching of Cicero filled them with a consolation, a hope, and a distinction. They, the scholars, would not be confounded with the vulgar herd; they would mount upwards, and from some serene height shun the turmoil of the world. They would watch the progress of things, and be for ever occupied in learning more and more of the divine order. The scientific men, among whom was Rabelais. looked upon Nature, and

[1] Thus Dolet writes:—

"Vivens videnscque gloriâ meâ frui
Volo: nihil juvat mortuum
Quod vel disertè scripserit vel fecerit
Animosè."

worshipped Him who created this vast and wonderful cosmos. The scholars, among whom was Dolet, took greater pleasure in the thought that they might for ever float invisible in the pure regions of the upper airs, superintend and study the ways of men, and mark the slow progress towards the Highest Culture.

Dolet is the representative man of the *Société Angélique*. He was its greatest scholar, the bravest of its speakers, and the most unfortunate, unless we may except his friend, Bonaventure Desperiers.

Desperiers, one of the secretaries of Margaret, the sister of Francis I., was a scholar of a lower order, no mean poet, but a *raconteur* of the very first rank. His stories, written for the amusement of the little Béarnese Court, are told with extraordinary *verve* and dexterity. Unfortunately he carried the Protestant tendencies of his mistress far beyond the limits assigned by her piety and good sense. The soft and limpid atmosphere of pure thought, the rapt mysticism, in which his gentle patron sat, became insufferable to him, and he quitted her service, or was made to leave it, while he had not yet committed himself to the opinions which, no doubt, were already lying in his heart. But when he published his 'Cymbalum Mundi'—a book which scoffs openly at Protestant and Roman alike, which derides those who pray or look for any answer to their prayers, which under the thinnest veil laughs at faith, hope, creed, and dogma—he cut off from himself every friend, every avenue of refuge. There came a moment when he realised that there was left to him no protector, no asylum, no means of living, no mode of escape from his enemies; there were thousands who longed to burn him; the last meal which

could be paid for was eaten; the last appeal for help had been rejected; and poor Desperiers, despairing, fell upon his sword, and so died.

Rabelais divided his time between his hospital work and this circle of scholars and poets. He acted as reader to many of the publications of Gryphe, and he edited two works, the Latin letters of Mainardi, and a couple of Latin forgeries, which he proudly called "ex reliquiis venerandæ antiquitatis," consisting of a pretended will and a contract. It was, some suppose, in consequence of his inability to detect this forgery that Rabelais resolved to publish no more serious works. No doubt he must have been mortified at a failure which reflected on his learning. But as he did subsequently publish learned and serious works, the theory is untenable. We must seek elsewhere for the cause of 'Gargantua and Pantagruel.'

The popular literature of the day dealt largely in knights, deeds of prowess, giants, and wonders. The 'Histoire des Quatre Fils Aymon,' 'Valentine and Orson,' the exploits of Fierabras, the tale of Melusine, the story of Merlin and of Huon de Bourdeaux, were among the more popular of the cheap books issued to meet the vulgar taste. Rabelais, probably with no view of making a reputation for himself, but in simple gaiety and careless ness, set himself to burlesquing the chivalrous romances. He would have a hero who should be as valiant as Fierabras, as invincible as Huon, as adventurous as the Four Sons. We may be very certain that with his common-sense he had already perfectly ascertained his own position as a scholar. This was respectable. He did not stand in the first front with Scaliger, but he had some reputation. On the other hand, as a botanist, a physi-

cian, an anatomist, and a lecturer, his name was great, and was growing greater. He had no reason to be disappointed. He had not failed. It was therefore, I believe, in pure fun and light-heartedness that he began the famous series, on the strength of which he lives to after-ages.

It would lead us too far to examine into the arguments and contradictory statements out of which the conclusion seems clear that the first publication in the style of *récit bouffon* by Rabelais was 'The great and inestimable Chronicles of the grand and enormous Giant Gargantua.' This simple piece of absurdity, hastily written, but enormously popular, prepared the way for the 'Pantagruel,' now the second book of the whole. The 'Chronicles' may be read in the edition published by Paul Lacroix. Their success induced the anonymous author to publish a sequel; but here he changed his plan. He was no longer writing mere burlesque; serious ideas are set forth side by side with overwhelming nonsense, and the reader steps from the realms of unbridled fancy to grave and wise criticism of things and men. Then, in order to make Gargantua worthy of Pantagruel, the father of the son, Rabelais rewrote his Chronicles altogether, and made a new First Book, which is wiser, more carefully written, more full of wisdom, than the second. Both were published under the anagram of Alcofribas Nasier.

In the same year, 1532, Rabelais produced his 'Pantagrueline Prognostication,' and an almanac for 1533. He kept up the almanac for every year until 1550, but they are now all lost with the exception of a few fragments. In one of them he dissuades his readers from believing in prognostics. "If good time comes, it will

not be by promise of the stars; if peace, it will not be for want of inclination among princes to make war, but for want of occasion. I say, for my own part, that if kings, princes, and Christian republics observe the Word of God, and govern themselves and their subjects by this Word, we shall never have seen a year more salubrious for the body, more peaceful for the soul, more fertile in good than that which is about to commence, and we shall see the face of heaven, the virtue of the earth, the bearing of the people joyous, gay, pleasant, and benign, beyond what we have seen for fifty years."

As for the 'Prognostication,' it is full of mirth, wisdom, and predictions which are either safe, such as that there will be a harvest in autumn, and so forth, or else mad with pure merriment and gaiety, as when he prophesies a happy year for France.

"The noble realm of France shall prosper and triumph this year in all manner of pleasures and delights, so that foreign nations will willingly repair hither. Little banquets, little merry-makings, and a thousand joyous things, will take place, in which every one will find pleasure. Never did you see so much wine, nor more dainty. Plenty of radishes in Limousin, plenty of chestnuts in Perigord and Dauphiné, plenty of olives in Languedoc, plenty of sand at Olonne, plenty of fish in the sea, plenty of stars in the sky, plenty of salt at Brouage, abundance of grain, vegetables, fruits, garden produce, butter, and milk. Nowhere any pestilence, any war, any grief, any poverty, any care, any melancholy. And those old double ducats, rose-nobles, angels, and royals, shall come back unto me with plenty of sequins and golden crowns."

It was not, as it turned out, a particularly happy year, especially for those who were burned for heresy.

In 1533 Rabelais accompanied his patron and old friend, Cardinal du Bellay, proceeding on a special mission to Rome with the desire of obtaining for Henry VIII., whose cause was taken up by Francis I., his divorce from Catharine of Aragon. Rabelais promised himself great things during this expedition. He would visit all the scholars in whatever Italian towns they passed through; he would search for plants not known in France; he would make archæological discoveries; and he would make a map with plans and drawings to illustrate the topography of Rome. What he did amounted to very little. They passed too rapidly through the towns; he discovered no new plants; he dug in a vineyard which his patron bought for him and found nothing; and he learned that what he proposed to do for the topography of Rome had already been done by an Italian, Marliani. In 1534, after the failure of Du Bellay's mission, he came back to Lyons with Marliani's book in his hand, and nothing more to show for his journey. This, however, he published with notes of his own, dedicated to Du Bellay.

There was probably a special reason why he wished to return to Lyons in 1534. This has been discovered in a book of manuscript verse found in the library of Toulouse. Among them are two Latin poems on the death of Théodule, infant son of François Rabelais.

> "Lugdunum patria et pater est Rabelæsus: utrumque
> Qui nescit, nescit maxima in orbe duo."

Little Théodule, about whose existence—certainly well known to the intimate friends of Rabelais—nothing was openly said, thus makes his brief appearance in the

world, immortalised by a set of verses in manuscript upon a little illegitimate infant, whose existence would never have been known but for the reputation of his father. Who was the mother of the child? Unless some other friend has celebrated the mistress of Rabelais as his child has been celebrated, in Latin verses still lying in some old manuscript volumes waiting to be read, we shall never know. Rabelais himself preserves absolute silence about mistress and son. On all other personal matters he is loquacious: on this he is silent. There are no women in his romance save poor Badebec, Queen Entelecheia, and a hag or two. Why did he make no sign of what may have been the one tender chapter in his life? He writes as if the natural tenderness of man for woman—the sacred respect of one sex for the other—had been crushed in him by long years of monastic discipline. And yet the child! Is it sentimental to think that a man so full of noble thoughts, so intensely human in all other respects, was not lacking on this side as well, and that his silence with regard to his mistress was due to the reticence of a heart which had known love, and could not speak of this passage of his life in pages half burlesque?

Or, which is more likely,—because this sentimental theory smacks of the nineteenth century,—did Rabelais keep silence about this thing because the matter would have given an additional handle to his enemies?

New editions of the 'Gargantua' and 'Pantagruel' appeared in 1535. In the following year Rabelais again went to Rome, on the invitation of Cardinal du Bellay. A series of letters written by him to his old friend the Bishop of Maillezais have fortunately been preserved.

By the help of these we can understand pretty clearly the kind of life he led there.

In the first place, it was necessary to set himself right with the Church, whose rules he had been violating for some twelve years unheeded. He therefore addressed to Pope Paul III. a petition, in which he confessed, with official penitence, how, having obtained permission to pass from the Franciscan to the Benedictine order, he had only left the former, and had been wandering about the world thinking of nothing so little as a return to the dulness of a monastery; how, as regards his pursuits, he had studied medicine, and had become singularly irregular in his canonical hours. He therefore prayed for absolution, for permission to go into any Benedictine convent which would receive him, to hold ecclesiastical offices, and to practise medicine without fees, without the use of the knife, and without fire. The absolution and the permission were granted. Rabelais therefore had nothing to fear from the Church. But he did not look about for a Benedictine convent which would be willing to receive him; and he seems to have thought it unnecessary to mention that he was the author of those very popular works, 'Gargantua' and 'Pantagruel.' In the letter to Geoffroy d'Estissac, we learn, besides the happy termination of this important business, all the news of Rome. Rabelais collects the epigrams of Pasquin and Marforio for his friend; he tells him how the Turk has fought the Persian; how the Cardinal, his patron, has interviews with great men; how he is looking about for curious flowers, plants, and vegetables. It is to Rabelais that France owes the melon, the artichoke, and the carnation; he sends seeds for the Bishop's

mother, with instructions how to use them; he buys curiosities for him, and so on. It is to be remarked that, outside the leaves of his romance, there is nothing whatever in Rabelais but what is grave and earnest.

In 1537 he is found in Paris assisting at a dinner, which is certainly one of the earliest of literary banquets. This historic feast—far more interesting than that classic repast offered a few years later to Jodelle, after the performance of the first classic drama, written in French—was held in honour of the escape of Dolet from a charge of murder grown out of a homicide. The list of the guests shows pretty well the character of their opinions. Among them were Budé, the great scholar, who saved his skin from the stake by never-ceasing professions of orthodoxy, just as a free-thinking clergyman might be perpetually signing the Thirty-nine Articles; Bérauld, the grave, pious, and Protestant tutor of the three great Chatillon brothers, Odet, Gaspard de Coligny, and François d'Andelot; Danés, the great Hellenist; Toussain, also a Hellenist, called the Living Library; Salmon, called Macrinus (the lean), who wrote quantities of Latin verses, and fondly thought his reputation would be greater than that of Horace; Nicolas Bourbon, tutor of that incomparable lady, Jeanne d'Albret; Voulté; Marot; and Rabelais himself. Why did no one preserve a record of what they said at this banquet, and so make it immortal?

From Paris Rabelais repaired to Montpellier, where, on May 22d of the same year, he received his doctor's degree, and resumed his lectures. Dolet, Macrin, and Sussanneau, himself a physician and writer on medical subjects, wrote Latin verses, in which the skill and learning of Rabelais are lauded in the highest terms.

We may remark that not one of these writers makes the slightest allusion to 'Pantagruel.' Is it possible that his friends were ignorant of the identity of Alcofribas Nasier with their learned doctor?

After two years at Montpellier, Rabelais went back first to Lyons, and then to Paris, where, in 1540, he entered the Collegiate Chapter of St Maur des Fossés, obtaining another permission from the Pope, with absolution up to date, to enter this chapter instead of a convent, to recognise the degree of Montpellier, to exercise everywhere the practice of medicine, and to hold any benefices which might be conferred upon him. But although he calls the abbey a "paradise of salubrity, amenity, serenity, conversation, delights of all honourable kinds, agriculture and the country life," he does not appear to have been able to rest in it long, for we find him in 1543 at St Symphorien, near Lyons (where he witnessed the death of Guillaume du Bellay), at Chinon, Ligugé, Angers, and perhaps in Normandy.

During this period Rabelais was busy with his Third Book. It was necessary to obtain the royal sanction for its publication. And here he had to risk offending the prejudices of the king, whose moods as regards heresy were capricious. Three at least of the social circle of Lyons were dead—Dolet, strangled and burned; Desperiers, a suicide; Marot, a half-starved wanderer in Piedmont. Great caution was necessary. Rabelais was fortunate in pleasing the king, who, before granting permission, caused the work to be read to him. The first two books pleased him so greatly that he gave permission for a new edition of them, and for the publication of the third. As regards the issue of a new

edition, that was by no means advisable. Rabelais found his safety in declaring that the impieties which his enemies saw in the earlier editions were due to the ignorance or malignity of printers. Much safer to let this general defence stand without spoiling it by a corrected edition. The permission was signed in September 1545. The Third Book appeared in 1546.

The favour of the king, of Margaret, of the Guises, the Chatillons, the Du Bellays, seemed to promise firm and steady support for the future. But in 1547 the king died, and a reaction against liberty of thought began immediately. A violent attack was made on Rabelais. They even printed what they called a specimen of the unpublished Fourth Book, which perhaps they had stolen, or perhaps invented. Rabelais, by no means inclined to martyrdom, hastened to find safety in flight. He got to Metz, where, in comparative freedom from anxiety, he practised medicine and waited. But meantime he found himself in grievous want, and wrote to the Cardinal du Bellay for assistance. The Cardinal had his own affairs to think of; he had lost Court favour; like his brother Cardinal, Odet de Chatillon, he was suspected of liberal tendencies; and, not feeling safe in such a conflagration of fanaticism, he withdrew to Rome, whither, in 1548, he called his old friend. Presently there occurred the birth of Henry the Second's eldest son. Great rejoicings were held in Rome by the Cardinal du Bellay. Rabelais wrote an account of the festivities to the Cardinal de Lorraine, which is preserved under the title of 'Sciomachie.' It was a stroke of policy instigated by Du Bellay, who next year returned to Paris with him. The Cardinal

de Lorraine received the author of the description of the *fête* favourably, and presented him with the living of Meudon.

But the attacks of his enemies did not cease with the restoration to safety. From both sides, Catholic and Protestant, cries came that the book ought to be suppressed, and its author burned. Calvin was as hostile as the Sorbonne. Rabelais in vain dedicated the Fourth Book to Odet de Chatillon. In spite of the royal permission, he did not dare to proceed beyond the eleventh chapter. There the Book broke short off. This was in 1549. Between two and three years passed, Rabelais during this time living quietly at Meudon, where, according to the traditions collected on the spot by Antoine Leroy, only one generation after, he preached, catechised the children, welcomed his friends, and led an exemplary life.

Then a very singular thing happened. On February the 19th, 1552, a fortnight before the Parliament allowed the sale of the book, Rabelais resigned not only the living of Meudon, where he resided, but also that of Jambet, in the diocese of Le Mans, where the duties had been discharged by a *vicaire*. Why did he resign? We know nothing, and are therefore perfectly free to conjecture the reasons of his resignation. Perhaps it was not altogether a voluntary act. Perhaps he felt that he was growing old: yet there is no hint or tradition of failing health, and he was not yet more than seventy. Perhaps he was touched with a sense of the incongruity of his position in the Church when considered with certain chapters in the new book. Perhaps he was obliged to give up the benefices before the Parliament

would let the work be sold. Perhaps he took a pension from each on retiring.

Now, most certainly, no Parliament at that time would have authorised the sale of any heretical book at all; if it licensed the Fourth Book, it must have been as a harmless work. We might just as well expect Convocation to say to Bishop Colenso, "Give up your mitre, and then we will encourage the sale of your book."

It is best to believe that the old man, now that life was drawing to its close, now that his friends were dead, dispersed, and in exile, discerned at last the wickedness of continuing to say masses, which were to him empty forms, in the cause of a Church which was full of absurdities and corruptions. This seems borne out by the spirit of the last Book, which was written, I believe, in the short interval of a year—all that was left him for work after his resignation. The Fifth and last Book was found in manuscript, but wanting the author's corrections. It is not certain who was the editor, and here we need not inquire. It first appeared in 1562, and as we now have it, in 1564.

His Fourth Book out, his Fifth Book finished, though not yet corrected—the possessor of a name which made priests and monks writhe, and all other men applaud; a great physician, a great botanist, a great anatomist, and a great linguist,—Rabelais waited for the end. He might reasonably hope now to die in his bed. In fact, amid the stories that are told of his last words, the one thing certain is that he died in his bed from natural causes, not by the efforts of the monks. As for these stories—how he died making an irreverent pun, how he said he was going to seek a *grand peut-être*, and so on—we may

dismiss them. I should have been inclined to believe that Rabelais, like all Frenchmen, made an edifying end, fortified by the rites of the Church, but for a verse of Tahureau, who died only two years after Rabelais, and ought to have known the facts of his death. The learned doctor, Rabelais, he says, lies under this tomb :—

> "Even in death he made a mock of those
> Who at his death most mourned."

He died in Paris, in the Rue des Jardins, parish of St Paul. They buried him at the foot of a tree which preserved his name at least to 1660. As soon as he was dead, friends and enemies alike began to weave, invent, and attribute stories to him. The name of Rabelais was in itself an invitation to all the world to shoot rubbish over it until the life of this great writer became a string of silly, old, and pointless anecdotes, from which it has only been rescued by the labours of the most recent biographers.

The book was there, too, for all sorts of follies to be said and written about it: of these the making of "keys" was perhaps the most foolish. Men proved that Pantagruel was Francis the First, Henry the Second, Antoine de Bourbon, or anybody else. They assigned to every character a historical origin, careless of the fact that neither in character nor in events was there any resemblance. The book, it is true, teems with allusions local, contemporary, and personal. But Pantagruel, Panurge, and Friar John had no more real existtance than Autolycus or Captain Bobadil.

Epitaphs, too, began to be written as soon as the breath was out of his body. They prove how great a place he held in the minds of his contemporaries.

He had offended the poet Joachim du Bellay, a natural son of one of the illustrious brothers, when they were at Rome together with the Cardinal. It is not difficult to guess the cause of offence. Joachim, a poet who has left a great deal of verse which does not permit itself to be read, and two or three poems of considerable sweetness and delicacy, was above all, a pedant and innovator in language, and a writer who placed form before everything. But Rabelais had no sympathy with art of this kind. His eminently practical nature only saw subject for ridicule in the things about which the school founded by Ronsard were so proud, and so deeply in earnest. They could not but be angry with a man who held them up to derision. As soon as the writer of this highly offensive parody was dead, Joachim, like all pedants and prigs, a creature of small nature, took his miserable revenge. He wrote an epistle in which Rabelais is made to confess that he owned no God except sleep and gluttony, love and wine: that he was a physician in pretence, his real business being to make men laugh.

Then Ronsard had his turn. He, as well as Joachim, was jealous of Rabelais, and hated him. Rabelais was popular,—Ronsard was left alone and forgotten; Rabelais laughed,—Ronsard groaned and sneered. Rabelais rolled out his teaching in the copious mother-tongue, which Ronsard was perpetually trying to alter and improve. Rabelais was loved, Ronsard was neglected. Accordingly, he wrote an epitaph "d'un Biberon." "If anything should grow from his grave, it must be a vine. . . . Never did the sun rise too early but he had been drinking; never did night fall too late to see him drinking still. . . . The fellow drank night and day."

And so, that there should be no mistake about who was meant, he goes on:—

"He sang Gargantua's might of yore;
The mare he rode, the mace he bore:
And great Panurge, and of the place
Where dwell the Papimanic race,
And how they talked and how they dressed,
And Friar John and all the rest—
The combats, and the honour due
To Pantagruel's valiant crew. . .
O stranger, when thou passest here,
With cups, not tears, salute his bier;
Erect a tomb with flagons crowned,
Spread hams and sausages around;
Fitter for him these tributes are
Than lilies fresh and roses rare."

Baïf, more good-naturedly, wrote:—

"O Pluto, Rabelais receive,
That thou, the king of those who grieve,
Among the sad and weeping crew
Mayst show at last a laugher too."

Such, so far as can be made out, was the life of Rabelais. We go on to consider the nature and contents of his great work.

CHAPTER II.

THE GIANT OF TOURAINE.

GARGANTUA was the great giant whose exploits were remembered by the old women, and told to the children. Especially was his memory dear to the Tourangeaux, the Angevins, and the Poitevins.[1] Rabelais heard about him as he clung to his mother's apron at the low doorway of the house in the Rue de la Lamproie, or wandered with her among the vines of La Devinière. The schoolboys of Seuilly knew all about him; the giant was heard of at La Baumette; and if the monks at Fontenay-le-Comte listened to the talk of the town children, they would learn how Gargantua once loved to sit upon the clock-tower of their church with one foot on the spire of Niort and the other on that of Luçon. Now, as each of these spires was a good twenty miles from Fontenay, it will be seen that Gargantua was no common giant. It was he, indeed, who set up the great dolmen at Poitiers, and the *pierre couverte* of Saumur. When he scraped the mud off his shoes he made great mounds and hills, which are still standing to witness if the story

[1] See Recherches sur Gargantua en Poitou avant Rabelais. Par M. L. Desaivre. Niort: 1869.

lies. You may find his boots at Chatillon-sur-Seine—they are now the Monts Jumeaux. His spoon and his clogs are to be seen in the Ile d'Oleron, and his soup-turcen is still shown at Verdes.

He was a giant who devoured everything. Once he drank at a ford and swallowed six bullocks, the cart laden with wood which they were dragging across the river, and the rustic who drove them. Another time he swallowed a ship loaded with gunpowder, and suffered in consequence from a colic, which could only be cured by blowing up the powder. He was a giant advanced in years, had long white hair, and wore an immense beard. Sometimes he carried a basket on his back, and by throwing out the contents he made hills and mounds. Learned men and antiquarians have interested themselves in Gargantua, the great throat giant.[1] He has been shown to be a solar myth, the Moloch to whom the Gauls offered human sacrifices, the Baal whose solstitial fires are still lit in Western Ireland and in Western France on the eve of St John. But to Rabelais, who knew nothing about the solar myth, he was simply the giant whose colossal figure had filled his childish imagination. And when, inspired by some whim, whether of disappointment or not, he resolved to write a popular book, he took the giant of Touraine for a peg, and produced, writing it at a single heat, the 'Grandes Chroniques Gargantuines.'

It has already been explained that the "Chronicles" were subsequently rewritten. They have been published by M. Paul Lacroix, together with a volume called 'Chronicles Admirables,' which is an imitation of the former, with plagiarisms from "Pantagruel." Except

[1] Compare *gargote, gargouille,* and the argot *gargue* for *bouche.*

as an example of an author's first and hasty treatment, the "Chronicles" do not repay perusal.

The "Gargantua," which now stands as the First Book in the published works, is in reality the Second. The lubberly schoolboy giant of the "Chroniques" had in his son "Pantagruel" a wise, prudent, and far-seeing king. Pleased with the humanity of his hero, Rabelais proceeded to give him a more worthy ancestry; and with this object, while still preserving some of the giant machinery, he substituted for the 'Chroniques Gargantuines' the "Gargantua," certainly the freshest, if not the most vigorous and the richest in ideas, of all the books. It was written at the age, according to the usual reckoning, of forty-nine; but he had only been in the world for eight years. In other words, he brought to bear upon "Gargantua" the learning of middle age and the freshness of youth. Let it always be insisted upon that Rabelais was ever, so to speak, an outsider. The contrasts, the follies, the confusions of his most remarkable and distracted age were clearly visible to one who had not grown up in the midst of them, who came from the seclusion of a convent, and found himself suddenly plunged into a world which hitherto he knew only by hearsay.

'The very Horrific Life of the great Gargantua, father of Pantagruel,' begins with a dixain addressed to his readers. Rabelais's verse is not his strong point. It concludes with the often-quoted lines—

> "Better is it to write of laughter than of tears,
> For laughter belongs to man."

The author's prologue follows,—a mixture of learning,

ostentatiously paraded after the manner of Rabelais, and of spontaneous unaffected merriment and mirth.

He addresses himself especially to the illustrious company of drinkers. He invites them, in considering his book, to remember those little boxes, once in use among the Greeks, which they called "Sileni." They were fashioned in all kinds of shapes—grotesque and fanciful, attractive or repulsive. Yet, within, they were full of precious things—balm, ambergris, amomon, musk, civet, and jewels. Or they may remember Socrates, likened by Alcibiades to one of these Sileni. He was ugly in person, ridiculous in his carriage, simple in manners, poor in fortune, rustic in apparel, yet always laughing, always drinking, always telling stories, "always," says Rabelais, "dissimulating his divine wisdom." And under this rugged exterior there were found virtues of the rarest—courage invincible, a sobriety without parallel, certain content, perfect assurance, and incredible contempt for all that men so much struggle after.

The author's book, in the same way, is to be seriously considered. It is not the hood which makes the monk. "Did you ever see a dog coming across a marrow-bone? If you have, you have been able to note with what devotion he regards it, with what care he guards it, with what fervour he holds it, with what affection he breaks it, and with what diligence he sucks it. . . . In imitation of the dog it becomes you to be wise, to appreciate and esteem those fair books of lofty aim, easy to follow, hard to encounter. Then by curious lessons and frequent meditation, to break the bone and to suck the marrow."

We are perfectly justified, therefore, in taking Rabe-

lais at his word, and expecting to find a purpose in his madness, a meaning behind the extravagances of the surface. It is proposed in the following analysis to suppress the extravagances as much as possible. In doing so, the mirthfulness of the author, it is true, will disappear. This is not always a subject of regret; and yet Rabelais without his gaiety is not the real Rabelais. Above all, before all, he is essentially *l'homme qui rit.*

As for the genealogy of Gargantua, that, he says, apparently regarding the book of Pantagruel's father as naturally following that of the son, may be found in the 'Grande Chronique Pantagrueline.' With the genealogy, in an ancient tomb of bronze, were discovered the verses which he calls the "Fanfreluches Antidotées." These verses seem to be pure mystification and nonsense, perhaps written in ridicule of the famous quatrains of Nostradamus, whom, as a physician, Rabelais probably knew and certainly respected, but whom, as a prophet, he was bound to deride. It is noteworthy that Nostradamus, who had passed through the medical school of Montpellier with the highest credit, and afterwards lectured there, was at this time practising medicine and writing his prophetic quatrains in Provence. He issued, too, a prophetic almanac, which no doubt Rabelais had in his mind when he published his "Prognostication." It would be pleasant to contrast the frank and mirthful figure of Rabelais with the solemn visage of this sixteenth-century "Sludge the Medium;" but it cannot be done here.

Gargantua was the son of Grandgousier—"a *bon raillard* in his time, who loved to drink neat as much as any man who then was in the world, and willingly

would eat salt meat"—and Gargamelle, his wife, daughter to the king of the Parpaillos. It would appear that Grandgousier was a Tourangeau by birth, and that he lived in or near the town of Chinon, because, on the day of his son's birth, he had invited to drink with him the good folk of Seuilly, Cinais Marçay, La Roche Clermault, Coudray-Montpensier, and other places, all of which lie around that illustrious city, to a feast of tripes with immeasurable drink. Then comes the *propos des buveurs* (the drinkers' talk), which makes up a whole chapter, in which Rabelais abandons himself to the joviality of a pen almost too faithful.

"Then began flagons to go, hams to trot, goblets to fly, cups to tinkle. Draw, reach, turn, mix: hand it me without water. So, my friend; whip me off this glass gallantly; produce me your claret, a weeping glass. A truce with thirst. Ha! false fever, wilt thou not begone? . . . Ventre Saint Quenet! let us talk of drinking. . . . Which was first, thirst or drinking? Thirst: for who in the days of innocence would have drunk without thirst? Drinking: because *privatio præsupponit habitum*. . . . The stone called asbestos is not more inextinguishable than the thirst of my paternity. Appetite comes in eating, said Angeston, but thirst goes away in drinking. Remedy against thirst? It is the exact opposite of that against the bite of a dog. Always run after the dog and he will never bite you; always drink before thirst and it will never reach you. . . . White wine—pour out all, pour out: pour here, pour there—fill up, my tongue is peeling. To you, comrade, with joy, with joy. La! la! la! it is all swallowed up. O Lachryma Christi! It is wine de la Devinière—it is divine wine. O the lovely white wine! by my soul it is nothing less than wine of taffetas!"

While they were thus drinking and making merry the

child Gargantua was born. The first words uttered by the infant were not, like those of other children, "*Mies, mies! mies!*" but "*À boyre! à boyre! à boyre!*" as if inviting the whole world to drink, and so loud that he was heard by the whole country of Beauce and Bibarais.

In this book, as in "Pantagruel," we are with giants, and have to remember the necessities of the gigantic nature. Gargantua, for instance, requires, to provide him with milk, seventeen thousand nine hundred and thirteen cows—Rabelais ever loves to be accurate; the carriage in which he is taken abroad must be drawn by oxen; each of his shirts took 900 ells of Chatelheraut linen, besides 200 for the gussets: the rest of his attire consumed a proportionate quantity of stuff. His colours were white and blue; the former signifying joy, gladness, and delight—the latter signifying heaven and heavenly things. This mystic meaning of the colours requires a whole chapter to itself full of learned reference. As a baby, the infant giant very early showed remarkable qualities.

"It did one good to see him, for he was a fine boy with about eight or ten chins, and cried very little. If it happened that he was put out, angry, vexed, or crossed—if he fretted, if he wept, if he cried—if drink were brought him he would be restored to temper, and suddenly become quiet and joyous. One of his governesses told me that at the very sound of pints and flagons he would fall into an ecstasy, as if he were tasting the joys of Paradise; and upon consideration of this, his divine complexion, they would every morning, to cheer him up, play with a knife upon the glasses, on the bottles with their stoppers, and on the pint-pots with their lids, at the sound whereof he became gay, would leap for joy, and would rock himself in the cradle, lolling with his head, and monochordising with his fingers."

We may pass over the rest of Gargantua's infancy. We next come to his education, in which Gargantua is no longer a giant, but an ordinary prince. He was at first intrusted to a learned doctor called Tubal Holofernes, who spent five years and a quarter teaching him to say his A B C backwards. This useful branch of knowledge achieved, the tutor proceeds to spend thirteen years over Donat's Latin Grammar, and certain collections of moral sayings and verses belonging to the old methods of education. Thirty-four years more were spent in these pursuits, after which Tubal Holofernes fortunately died. Then he was confided to one Jobelin Bridé, who pursued the same methods, by which the young giant grew more ignorant every day. Grandgousier, in despair at seeing his son grow up so heavy, ignorant and loutish, consults his friend the Viceroy of Papeligosse (country of Laugh-at-the-Pope), who presents to the king a young page named Eudemon, the pupil of one Ponocrates. This boy, neat and trim in apparel—Rabelais always lays great stress on neatness of dress—with an assured bearing, but with youthful modesty, addresses Gargantua, who all the time hangs his head like a boor, in an oration of pure and elegant Latin. Grandgousier is so angry at the contrast between the two boys that he orders poor old Jobelin Bridé to be instantly executed,—a sentence commuted, by the intercession of the viceroy, into the penalty of taking as much drink as he could carry. It is then resolved that the boy shall be placed under the charge of Ponocrates, and, with Eudemon, shall travel up to Paris.

Having been serious for two chapters, we go back to pure burlesque, and the exploits of Gargantua the giant

on his mare. She was as big as six elephants; she was brought by sea in three carricks and a brigantine. With the whisking of her tail she laid low a whole forest. Mounted on her back, Gargantua rode to Paris, and was received with great admiration by the Parisians, who, says Rabelais, are more easily drawn together by a fiddler or a mule with bells than by an evangelical preacher—a peculiarity which they still preserve. The young giant rewarded their admiration by carrying away the bells of Nôtre Dame, to hang round the neck of his mare. To recover these bells the Parisians sent their most esteemed orator, Maître Janotus de Bragmardo, who came, like the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, duly preceded by three bedells, and followed by six Masters of Arts—Artless Masters—"Maistres Inerts," Rabelais calls them. His oration is a parody on the pretensions of the old-fashioned scholars, the ostentatious parade of bad Latin, and the learned discourses of doctors. The bells are restored, and the orator rewarded. Then we leave the realms of the miraculous and become human again. Gargantua ceases to be a giant, and Rabelais develops—it is the best, the wisest, the most useful chapter of his book—his theory of what the education of a prince should be.

And first, what it was before Ponocrates, a scholar of the new type, took Gargantua in hand.

The pupil begins by getting up between eight and nine o'clock—according to Scripture authority, "Vanum ést vobis ante lucem surgere" ("It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early"), Ps. cxxvii. 2—and, without wasting time over combing his hair, sits down at once to an enormous breakfast. This despatched, he

goes to church, where he hears "six-and-twenty or thirty masses." After the masses, they bring him a cartload of rosaries, with which he says as many paternosters as sixteen hermits could have done in the time. Then comes a poor half-hour of study; but his heart is in the kitchen. At dinner he eats as much as he can carry, and drinks without stint, holding that the limits of drinking are when the cork of the drinker's shoes swells up half a foot. Dinner over, they play cards and all sorts of games. Rabelais actually enumerates two hundred and seventeen. Then he sleeps for two hours. When he wakes, he says a few more paternosters, and goes to see rabbits ferreted or caught in snares. Then he has supper, with more drinking and more card-playing, and so to bed.

This is such an education as the old *régime* would bestow on a young prince. First and foremost are the duties owed to the Church; and that these may be the more deeply impressed, masses and Ave Marias and paternosters are multiplied. Also, since the ignorance of princes makes the power of priests, care is taken that no real knowledge shall be taught. Nor have his teachers even the sense to see that their pupil should be drilled in manly exercises. Nothing is taught at all: he is left to the brute instincts of his nature; he eats, drinks, gambles, and sleeps, without a thought of anything noble, or anything even useful. Now mark the contrast when Ponocrates changes all.

Gargantua is now brought daily into the company of learned men, by discoursing with whom he may be led to desire improvement and knowledge. He gets up at four in the morning. While they are dressing him

a page reads aloud a chapter of Holy Scripture; then prayer is offered, and his master expounds the meaning of the chapter they have read, and repeats the lessons of the preceding day, after which his pupil deduces for himself conclusions bearing on the practical conduct of life. They then read for three hours; playing at tennis follows for as long as they like to play, which is until they are thoroughly well exercised. If there is any spare time before dinner, they spend it in recalling something of the morning's study. During dinner there is read some pleasant history of warlike actions; after which they discourse on the nature and properties of all that may be on the table, with references to Athenæus, Pliny, and other ancient authors, so that in a short time Gargantua knows as well as any physician all that the ancients had said on these things. Cards are brought in after dinner, not for gambling, but for the purpose of learning the science of numbers; with these are diagrams and geometrical figures for the study of geometry and astronomy. Then they sing part-songs, or play music, Gargantua, for his own part, understanding how to play on the lute, the spinet, the German flute, the violin, and the sackbut. Recreation ended, there follow three more hours of study. Then come riding, tilting, and exercises under the direction of Gymnast. An amazing description follows, with all the exact extravagances with which Rabelais loved to illustrate a point and show his encyclopædic knowledge, of Gargantua's athletic prowess and powers. Next, they botanise in the meadows. At supper, the lesson read at dinner is continued. Then more singing and playing, with feats of legerdemain. Sometimes they spend the whole even-

ing in their games; at other times they pay visits to learned men or travellers. And if it is a clear full night when they go to bed, they mount to the top of the house to observe the stars and learn the courses of the planets.

Then, with his master, Gargantua briefly recapitulated what he had learned during the day.

"When they prayed unto God the Creator, adoring Him and ratifying their faith towards Him, and glorifying Him for His boundless goodness; and after rendering thanks to Him for all the past, they recommended themselves to the Divine mercy for all the future."

This was for fair weather; for rainy days a different course was followed, for then they cut wood, bottled hay, threshed the corn, practised painting and sculpture, visited workshops and factories, went to hear lectures, to see mountebanks, jugglers, and quacks, and used "greater temperance in eating and drinking."

Sometimes, however, they would take holiday, and spend it at Gentilly, St Cloud, or the Bois de Boulogne, dancing, fishing, trapping birds, drinking healths, and sporting. During these country excursions they would remind each other of what Virgil, Hesiod, or Politian had said of the country life.

Observe that the education which Rabelais prescribes for a young prince embraces every kind of knowledge, and every sort of exercise. No trade or handicraft is too humble for him to learn and practise. No single moment of the day is left unemployed; no faculty of the body or the mind is left untrained; play is rational, and confined within fair limits; study is real, and yet

not excessive—six hours a-day does not seem too much for books; no time is wasted over services, masses, and rosaries; all the religious training is the exposition of a chapter of the Bible, with prayers; and there are no vain disputations according to the forms of a barbarous logic.

Can there be, one reflects, a more sensible, a more rational method, of education? All is orderly, as becomes the training of a gentleman; nothing is immoderate: and even the games are made to serve some end of education. What end in education, we might ask, is served by the immoderately long hours given to football and cricket? What boy in modern England, where half the day seems given up to games, or in modern Germany, where all the day seems given up to books, is so well educated as the pupil of Ponocrates? Rabelais was not only before his age in the sixteenth century, he is even before the age of the nineteenth.

The education of Gargantua, which one hopes had approached completion, is interrupted by the war with King Picrochole.

Like all great wars, this sprang from a very small cause—nothing more than a squabble between certain cake-bakers of Lerné[1] and certain shepherds, subjects of Grandgousier. The Lerné people complain to their king Picrochole, who instantly, and without further debate or consideration, commands the *ban* and *arrière-ban* to be sounded through all the country, that all his vassals, of whatever condition, should come with what arms they have to the great Place before his castle.

[1] It is useless to point out how often Rabelais helps himself to names of places that he knows. Lerné is a little village seven miles from Chinon.

The army thus hastily summoned is quickly collected, and immediately sets out upon an invasion of Grandgousier's territory, all marching in loose and undisciplined order, pillaging, cattle-lifting, beating down the trees, and committing every kind of outrage.

Presently they come to Seuilly, where the people were ill with the plague, but where none of Picrochole's army took any hurt — "which is a most wonderful case; because the priests, curates, preachers, physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries who went to visit, to cure, to preach unto and admonish the sick, were all dead with the infection. Whence comes this to pass, my masters? I beseech you to think of it."

The town being pillaged, they proceed to the abbey, but find the gates made fast against them. Then the main army under Picrochole go on to the Ford called the Gué de Véde, leaving seven companies of foot and two hundred lancers, who began to break down the walls of the close in order to destroy the vines. The monks, not knowing what to do, decide in meeting of the chapter to make a procession with prayers, *contra hostium insidias.* One would think it was rather too late to pray against the enemy when he was already tearing and rooting up the vines.

"Now there was in the abbey a cloister monk named Friar John des Entommeures, young, gallant, frisk, lusty, adroit, bold, venturous, resolute, tall, thin, wide-mouthed, long-nosed, a quick despatcher of hours, a fine hurrier of masses, and fair accomplisher of vigils; in a word, a true monk, if ever there was since the monking world went monking in monkery; for the rest, a clerk to the teeth in matter of breviary. This monk, hearing the noise that the enemies

made in their vineyard, ran out to see what they were doing; and on perceiving that they were cutting the grapes, in which lay all their hopes of next year's drink, returns to the choir of the church, where the rest of the monks, all dismayed, were singing — 'im...im...pe...e...e...tum... tum...tum in...in...in...i...mi...mi...corum.' 'Well sung, indeed!' he cries. 'Why don't you sing "Farewell, baskets, vintage-time is over"? Devil take me if they are not all in our close, cutting away canes and grapes so well that for the next four years, par le corps de Dieu! there will not be so much as a gleaning in it! Ventre Saint Jacques, what shall we poor devils drink all the while? Seigneur Dieu, da mihi potum.'

"Then cried the claustral Prior, 'What doth this drunkard here? Let him be haled to prison! Thus to trouble the divine service!' 'But,' quoth the monk, 'let us take care that the service of wine be not troubled. You yourself, my lord Prior, love to drink of the best; so does every good man; that is a monkish proverb. But these responses that you chant here are out of season. Listen, all of you. Those who love wine, follow me! . . . Ventre Dieu! the goods of the Church!'

"Thus saying, he laid down his long gown, and seized the staff of the cross, which was made of the heart of an apple-tree, as long as a lance, the full grasp of the fist, and ornamented with *fleurs de lys*, nearly effaced. Thus he issued, clad in a fair jacket, making a scarf of his frock, and with this staff of the cross fell vigorously upon the enemy, who, without order, ensign, trumpet, or drum, were grape-gathering in the close. For the cornets and colour-bearers had laid down their standards by the sides of the walls; the drummers had knocked out the heads of their drums, in order to fill them with grapes; the trumpets were loaded with bunches. He charged them so rudely, without crying 'ware,' that he overthrew them like pigs, striking at random in the old fashion of fence. And of some he beat out the brains; of others he broke the arms and the legs; of others he dislocated the

spondyles of the neck; of others he broke the veins, smashed the nose, poked out the eyes, clave the mandibles, drove the teeth down their throats, broke their shoulder-blades, and barked their shins. 'If any one offered to hide himself among the thickest vine-branches, he broke his backbone and laid him flat like a dog. If any offered to escape by flight, he made his head fly in pieces by the lambdoidal suture. If any one climbed into a tree, thinking thus to be in safety, he impaled him with his staff. Some cried on St Barbe; others on St George; and some on St Nitouche; others, again, on Our Lady of Cunault, of Laurette, of Lenon, of Rivière. Some offered vows to St James; some to Cadouin; some to St John of Angely; some to St Eutrope of Saintes, to St Mexme of Chinon, to St Martin of Candes, to St Clouand of Sinais, to the relics of Jourezay, and a thousand other pretty little saints. Some died without speaking, others spoke without dying. Some cried aloud 'Confession: confession: *confiteor miserere; in manus.*' So great was the cry of the wounded that the prior of the abbey came out with all his monks. Then, when they perceived the poor people thus stretched flat among the vines and wounded to death, confessed some of them. But while the priests amused themselves with confessing, the little monklings ran to Brother John, and asked him how they could aid him. To which he replied that they should cut the throats of those who were knocked down. Thereupon, leaving their capes under a trellis, they proceeded to finish off and cut the throats of them whom he had already wounded. . . . Thus by his prowess were discomfited all those of the army who had entered into the close, to the number of 13,622, without counting women and children."

To be sure, the enemy had entered the vineyard with only seven companies of foot and two hundred lancers.

Meantime, Grandgousier, now grown old, and desirous of taking his rest, is dismayed to hear of the unprovoked and wanton invasion of the territory by his old

friend and ally. But he will not call his people together, nor try the chance of war, until he has first tried peace; and, on the advice of his council, he sent his Master of Requests to ask by what right or title Picrochole had thus broken the peace. At the same time, he writes a letter to Gargantua, his son, asking him to come, at this strait, and succour his people. The letter of the old king is plain, straightforward, and dignified.

The oration of the ambassador to King Picrochole is an imitation of Cicero's orations, full of classical indignation and correct invective. The mission fails. Then Grandgousier, resolved that there should be no possible charge open against himself, offered recompense a hundredfold for the attack upon the cake-bakers.

And then occurs the splendid dream of universal conquest.

Three of King Picrochole's nobles, coming to him respectfully bareheaded, offer to make him the most fortunate, the most chivalrous prince that ever reigned since the death of Alexander of Macedon.

"'Sire, this is our plan. You will leave here a small garrison. . . . You will divide your army into two. You will with the one half fall upon and defeat Grandgousier. From him you will get money in heaps, for the clown has plenty. We say clown, because a truly noble prince never has a penny. To look after the treasury is the act of a clown. With the other half you will overrun and take Saintonge, Angoumois, and Gascony. You will seize on all the ships at Bayonne, and coasting along Gallicia and Portugal, will take and pillage all the maritime places. Spain will yield, and the Mediterranean will be known by the name of the Picrocholinal Sea. That passed, Barbarossa yields himself your slave.'

"'I will give him quarter,' Picrochole interrupts with complacency.

"'Certainly, so that he be baptised,' say the counsellors.

"'Then you will take by force the kingdoms of Tunis, Hippos, Algiers, Bona, Corona, and, in short, the whole of Barbary. Meantime you will have laid your hand on Majorca, Minorca, Sardinia, Corsica, and the other isles in the Ligurian and Balearic Seas. Following up on the left, you will have taken Southern Gaul, Provence, the land of the Allobroges, Genoa, Florence, Lucca, and then *bon jour* to Rome. As for the Pope, he is already dead with fright.'

"'I shall not kiss his slipper,' says Picrochole the Conqueror."

They go on to take Italy, Naples, Sicily, Malta, Candia, Cyprus, Rhodes, and Palestine.

"'I shall rebuild the Temple of Solomon,' cries Picrochole.

"'Not yet—not yet. Wait a little. Do not be too hasty in your enterprises. What said Augustus? *Festina lentè.* You have first to gain Asia Minor, Caria, Lycia, Cilicia, Lydia, Phrygia, Mysia, and all the country to the Euphrates.'

"'Why,' cried the king, 'we are all mad! what shall we drink in these deserts?'

"'We have already provided for that. On the Syrian seas you will have 9014 ships laden with the best wine. They disembark at Jaffa, where we have collected 220,000 camels and 1600 elephants, that you captured hunting in Lydia. You have also the whole caravan of Mecca. Surely you have wine enough.'

"'But,' said Picrochole, 'we did not drink it fresh.'"

Already the future is the past, and he has in his imagination crossed these thirsty deserts.

Meantime the rest of his army has not been idle. They have conquered the whole of Europe, and are now at Constantinople.

"'Let us go,' cried the king; 'let us go at once and join them. I will be Emperor of Trebizonde. Shall we not kill all these dogs of Turks and Mohammedans?

"'Of course you will, and you will give their lands to those who have served you honourably.'

"'It is just,' he said. 'I give you Caramania, Syria, and all Palestine.'

"'Ah, sire! it is too good of you. We thank you. God make you always prosper!'"

The drama is interrupted by an old soldier, who asks what they are going to do when the world is conquered. It is, of course, the old story. "We will then sit down and rest," said Picrochole. "Would it not be better to rest at once?"

Meantime Gargantua, a giant again, is speeding on his great mare to his father's help. With him are his friends, Gymnast, Eudemon, and company. On the way Gymnast very cunningly kills Captain Tripet of the enemy's army; Gargantua tears up a whole tree for lance and club, receives cannon-balls as if they were grape-kernels, and entirely destroys the castle at the Ford of Véde, and stops up the river with dead bodies of the enemy. Then he arrives at his father's castle, where they have a grand feast, the *menu* of which is preserved for us by the author. An accident, which might have been attended with serious consequences, befell six pilgrims who were unfortunately hiding in the salad, and would have been swallowed by Gargantua, but that they stuck in his teeth. How they escaped, what further misfortunes overtook these pilgrims, and how they consoled themselves, may be sought in the original text. The supper meanwhile goes on. Friar John is sent for, and being

invited to sit and drink, proves himself as good at feasting, and at the Rabelaisian talk which accompanies it, as in defending vineyards. It is during these *propos de table* that Rabelais delivers one of his most vigorous attacks on monks.

Why, they ask Friar John, are monks avoided by all the world?

"'If you understand why a monkey in a family is always mocked and worried you will understand why monks are abhorred of all, both old and young. The monkey does not watch the house like a dog; he does not drag the cart like the ox; he gives no wool like the sheep; he does not carry burdens like the horse. . . . So with the monk. He does not cultivate the soil like the peasant; he does not guard the land like the soldier; he does not heal the sick like the physician; he does not teach like the evangelical doctor or the schoolmaster; he does not import goods and necessary things like the merchant.'

"'But the monks pray for all,' objects Grandgousier.

"'Nothing less,' says Gargantua. 'They only annoy the neighbourhood with ringing their bells.

"'Truly,' says Friar John, 'a mass, a matin, and a vesper well rung are half said. They mumble great store of legends and psalms, of which they understand nothing; they count plenty of paternosters and Ave Marias without thinking and without understanding, and that I call mocking God, and not making prayers. But God help them, if they pray for us, and not for fear of losing their fat soups.'"

The next ten chapters are occupied in great part with the exploits of this jolly monk, and the great victory over King Picrochole. Friar John sends Gargantua to sleep by reading the breviary, wakes them all up in the night for drink, says his hours, not after the rules of Paris or of Rome, but that of Fécamp, which is three

psalms and three lessons, or nothing at all, if you prefer; prefers his own rules to any, because "the hour was made for man, and not man for the hour;" his own, indeed, are like stirrups—long or short, as you please. Says the monk, "Short prayer reaches heaven, long drinking empties bottles." Gargantua is sometimes giant, sometimes man, in the war which follows. But he is always a wise, humane, and noble prince. Everything is to be paid for; he will have no outrages or abuses committed by his soldiers; and he freely dismisses all his prisoners with a convoy to take them to their homes. One remembers how, at this very time, Coligny, colonel of the French infantry, was introducing discipline for the first time among his rude and disorderly soldiers.

The soldiers rewarded, the prisoners released, and the men who had instigated and promoted the war punished by being made to work at the new printing-press, Gargantua proceeds to bestow honours and substantial gifts upon his friends. And for Friar John he builds the Abbey of Thelema.

CHAPTER III.

THE ABBEY OF THELEMA.

THE character of Friar John, which may be gathered from the story of his exploits in the vineyard, makes him the very last man in the world to create the Abbey of Thelema. Of this, however, Rabelais was careless. The abbey had to be created somehow, because it was in his mind. The Friar was ready to his hand, and he confided its foundation to him, albeit unworthy.

This Abbey of Thelema is one of the most graceful and most noble fancies that ever entered into the brain of man. It forms a fit pendant to the scheme of education which its founder drew up for a young prince. The Order of Thelema is a society composed entirely of young people living together in the freedom of gentlehood, unrestricted by any conventional and useless rules. They are to learn, by watching the wishes and wants of each other, how to live; they are to be occupied all day in study, in manly exercises, or in the acquirements of womanly accomplishments; they are to be entirely free from the petty cares and anxieties of the ignoble life; they are to live in accordance with the laws of nature, and are therefore to be exempt from disease. The abbey itself is a

miracle of architecture. It is to be the house of the highest expression of art, refinement, and luxury. When the monks and sisters have learned all that the Society is able to teach they may leave it, two by two, and go forth into the world, examples for all men and women to follow.

Friar John was offered the Abbey of Seuilly—we are still in the neighbourhood of Chinon—which he refused; then that of St Florent, or Bourgueil — also close to Chinon—or both, if he liked. But again he refused. "How," he asked, "am I, who cannot rule myself, to rule others? But," he adds, "if you think I have done you, or may henceforth do you, good service, give me leave to found an abbey after my own mind."

Gargantua thereupon made him a grant of land upon the river Loire on which he might establish his monastery. It was instituted for an order of monks and nuns whose rules should be the opposite of those of all other orders. Between them, Gargantua and the excellent Friar arranged their plan.

First, as all other convents are walled round, this must be without wall of any kind.

"Moreover, seeing there are certain convents in this world whereof the custom is, that if any women, even honourable and modest women, come in, the ground is swept over which they have passed, it was ordained, that if any man or woman belonging to a religious order should by chance enter, all the rooms should be thoroughly cleansed through which they had passed. And because in the monasteries of the world all is compassed, limited, and regulated by hours, it was decreed that here there should be neither clock nor dial, but that according to opportunities and occasions should be conducted all their work. For, said Gargantua, the greatest

loss of time that he knew was to count the hours. What good comes of it? And the greatest dotage in the world was to govern himself by the sound of a bell, and not by the dictation of judgment and common-sense.

"*Item*, Because at that time they put no women into nunneries but such as were either purblind, lame, crooked, ill-favoured, misshapen, lunatic, senseless, or corrupt; nor any men but those who were either sickly, low-born, simple, or good-for-nothing; therefore was it ordained that here should be admitted no women who were not fair, well-featured, and of sweet disposition—nor any men who were not comely, personable, and well-conditioned.

"*Item*, Because in the convents of women men come not but privily and by stealth, it was enacted that here there should be no women in case there be not men, nor any men in case there be no women.

"*Item*, Because both men and women who are once received into religious orders have been constrained after the year of probation to stay in them all the days of their life, it was ordered that all whatever, men or women, admitted within this abbey, should have full leave to depart in peace and contentment, whenever it should seem good to them to do so.

"*Item*, That, considering how religious men and women do ordinarily take the three vows of chastity, of poverty, and of obedience, it was ordered that here they might be honourably married, that they might be rich, and that they might live at liberty. As regards the legitimate age, the women were to be admitted from ten till fifteen, and the men from twelve till eighteen."

The preliminaries being agreed upon, the building was at once commenced. In the description of the building, Rabelais, who, like Victor Hugo, never touches a subject of which he is not master, has given so minute an account of a great and magnificent building, that architects have succeeded in reproducing the plan and elevation which

Rabelais had in his head. Greater descriptive power has never been shown than so to set forth a building as to enable a draughtsman nearly three hundred and fifty years later to represent on paper exactly such a building as the author pictured. Suffice it to say that the abbey was conceived in the spirit of the greatest luxury and magnificence. Stately fountains, spacious galleries, tilt-yards, riding-courts, theatres, swimming-baths, the garden of Déduit, or Delight, by the river-side, a labyrinth, tennis and ball courts, orchards planted with fruit-trees, a park full of deer, butts for guns, crossbow, and archery, stables, a falconry, a "venery," where beagles and hounds were kept, and outside the abbey rows of houses in which dwelt, for the convenience of the fraternity, all sorts of handicraftsmen, such as goldsmiths, lapidaries, jewellers, embroiderers, tailors, gold-drawers, velvet-weavers, tapestry-makers, upholsterers, and others who worked for the monks and nuns of the new order.

No novelist or romance-writer has ever conceived a more delightful abode than the Abbey of Thelema, or a more splendid and magnificent foundation.

"All their life was spent, not by laws, statutes, or rules, but according to their own free will and pleasure. They rose when they thought good; they ate, drank, worked, slept, when the desire came to them. No one woke them up; none forced them to eat, drink, or to do any other thing whatever. So had Gargantua established it. In their rule there was but this one clause—

FAY CE QUE VOULDRAS
(Do what you will);

because men who are free, well born, well bred, and conversant with honourable company, have naturally an instinct

which prompts them to virtuous actions and withdraws them from vice. This is called honour. . . . By this liberty they entered into a laudable emulation to do all of them what they saw pleased one. If one of them, either a monk or a sister, should say 'Let us drink,' they would all drink. If any one of them said 'Let us play,' they all played. If one said 'Let us go and take our pleasure in the fields,' they all went. . . . So nobly they were taught that there was not one among them but could read, write, sing, play upon musical instruments, speak five or six languages, and compose in them either in verse or in measured prose. Never were seen knights more valiant, more gallant, more dexterous on horse or foot, more vigorous, more active, more skilled in the use of arms, than were these. Never were seen ladies so proper, so handsome, less whimsical, more ready with hand, with needle, or with every honest and free womanly action, than were these. For this reason, when the time came that any man of the said abbey, either at the request of his parents or from some other cause, had a mind to go out of it, he carried along with him one of the ladies, namely, her whom he had chosen before for his mistress, and they were married together. And if they had formerly lived in Thelema in good devotion and amity, they continued therein, and increased it to a greater height in their state of matrimony: so that they entertained that mutual love till the end of their days just as on the very first day of their wedding."

The dream of the abbey is abandoned as soon as set down. We hear no more of it. Friar John, when we meet him again, has forgotten it. Certainly, this coarse *biberon* of a monk was not the man to be the head of an abbey in which gentlefolk alone were to be admitted; but an objection of this kind may be taken to most of the Rabelaisian episodes: the author conceives vividly in portions, but imperfectly as a connected whole. There

is nothing more outrageous in making Friar John propose the Abbey of Thelema than there is in making the wise and valiant Gargantua comb cannon-balls out of his hair and pick pilgrims out of his teeth. But the abbey! Would that we could have heard more of it! Would that the time were yet arrived when young men and maidens could live together in the sacred and honourable fraternity imagined by this prophet of a perfected humanity!

The description of the abbey appears to me the noblest dream of the sixteenth century, where so many things seemed possible, and men's minds rose to such grand conceptions. It is a vision which should have come to some great poet and been wedded to immortal verse. In this monastery, which is the world at its best, there is to be no ugliness or deformity, either moral or physical; there are to be no stupid rules, no chains of custom or convention—every one's conscience is to be his guide; there are no chapels, no masses, no beads, no bells—every brother communicates alone in his cell with his God; there are no fasts; there is none of the degrading servitude to law which troubles the outside world. It is a society of scholars, students, and artists, gentle all, living together according to the rules of nature, restrained by common-sense, honour, and the love of God, continuously learning to respect more and more the mysteries of that inconceivable marvel, which we call creation, by study and mutual love; advancing always by the road of unselfish labour to the higher life which mostly, to us of darkened spirit, seems so unattainable. They are always genial, cheerful, and thoughtful for each other. There are none of the feastings and revellings which do very well for the court of Grandgousier and the common people.

The *damoiseaux* and *damoiselles* of Thelema do not think of feasting. Their thoughts, like those of Rabelais when he wrote these chapters, are set on higher things. Love among them is free, and marriage the natural outcome of their life. All is noble; all is delightful; all is elevated; all is well-bred and worthy; and, to crown everything, from a Rabelaisian point of view, there is not a priest in the place.

CHAPTER IV.

THE YOUTH OF PANTAGRUEL.

THE Second Book, as it is generally called, has so many points of resemblance with the first, and is yet in most respects so greatly inferior, that it is like a rough draft from which the finished picture has been made. There is the same horrific birth of the young giant, but there are no *propos des buveurs*. The infancy and childhood of the prince are described as in the 'Gargantua,' but without the elaboration and reckless mirth which we find there. In place of the careful scheme of education and its strongly accentuated contrasts with the old methods, we have only a letter, remarkable indeed, and containing the germs of the system afterwards worked up by its author. Pantagruel goes to Paris, like his father; just as Gargantua listened to the florid harangue of Master Janotus, so does Pantagruel listen to the pleadings of advocates. Like Gargantua, he changes idle and dissolute habits for a life of study and industry; like him, he wages war and is victorious. There is more of the giant in Pantagruel than in Gargantua; there is less wisdom; there is even, careless of Art as Rabelais always is, less skill in construction. The main point of difference is that in Pan-

tagruel we are first introduced to Panurge, who is left out of this chapter because he deserves one all to himself.

In one of those years of antiquity in which everything happened which never can happen, when the month of March had no Lent and the middle of August fell in May, and in one week in which, by reason of its being leap-year, and a certain variation from their courses of both sun and moon, there were three Thursdays, there happened a miracle in the matter of medlars, which grew to so enormous a size that three of them filled a bushel. Great was the delight of the folk in eating of these medlars, but strange was the effect produced. For all those who ate them began to swell—some in the eyes, some in the shoulders, some in the head, and some all over—so that they became giants. Of this last tribe came, through a long race of ancestors, including Goliath, Cacus, Enceladus, Briareus, Antæus, and Fierabras, the great Pantagruel. Gargantua, his father, was four hundred fourscore forty-and-four years of age at the birth of his son,—observe that we have here nothing to do with the wise and valiant Gargantua, but only with the giant of the 'Grandes Chroniques.' The boy was born in a time of drought. His mother died in childbirth, so that the good Gargantua was distracted between joy at the birth of so goodly a son and grief at the death of his wife.

"'Shall I weep?' he said. 'Yes; for why? My wife, so good, is dead, who was the most this and the most that who ever was in the world. Never shall I see her; never shall I get such another. It is to me a loss inestimable. . . . Ah, Badebec! my mignonne, my friend, my darling; never shall I see thee. Ah, poor Pantagruel! thou hast lost thy good mother, thy sweet nurse, thy lady beloved.' . . .

And so saying he wept like a cow, but suddenly burst into laughing like a calf, when Pantagruel came into his mind. 'Ho, my little son!' he said, 'how lovely thou art! and much am I beholden to God for giving me so fair a son—so joyous, so smiling, so jolly. Ho! ho! ho! how glad I am! Let us drink; let us abandon melancholy; bring the best; rinse the glasses, lay the cloth, and turn out the dogs; blow up the fire, light the candle, hold my gown, for I will put myself in doublet, the better to entertain the gossips.'"

The child is called Pantagruel, from the Greek πανια, and a word "in the Hagarene language" meaning thirsty. In his infancy he is fed with the milk of 4600 cows, which is boiled for him in a great vessel made by the united efforts of all the braziers of Saumur, Villedieu of Normandy, and Bramont in Lorraine; and they served the boiled milk in a bell, which may still be seen at Bourges. The child was so strong that they bound him with chains, one of which is that now lying between the two towers of La Rochelle.

After many exploits possible only to giants, and perhaps hardly important enough to be remembered among themselves, the boy is sent to school at Poitiers. Here he erects the "Pierre levée," or raised stone, which still stands at a short distance from the town. He makes but a short stay at Poitiers, going from that place a round of visits to all the university towns of France. Starting from La Rochelle, he took ship to Bordeaux. Here he saw the mariners playing at chuck-farthing on the quay. From Bordeaux he went to Toulouse, where he learned to dance, and would have stayed longer but that he saw them burning three professors alive, and, in fear lest such a death might happen to himself, he departed and went to Montpellier, where he found excellent

wine of Mirevaux and jovial company. Nevertheless he went on to Avignon, where he fell in love, and was dragged away by his tutor Epistemon. Thence to Valence, to Angers, to Bourges, and to Orleans.

It has been supposed that Rabelais himself made this round. There is no occasion for any such theory. We know already that he lived at Ligugé, close to Poitiers, at Montpellier, and at Angers; we have shown that he most probably met Clement Marot at Bourges. Valence is near Montpellier; Orleans is not far from Bourges. As regards Toulouse and Bordeaux, which are not included in the Rabelaisian itinerary, we may observe that his remarks are quite general, and might be made without knowing the places. Bordeaux was a place of shipping: sailors everywhere gamble for pence. Toulouse was infamous to every scholar for the shameful burning of Jean Caturce, professor of law, for heresy. Of this deed of cruelty Rabelais would hear all the details from his friend Dolet, who had the courage to denounce the act when a young man of only twenty. It was at Orleans that Pantagruel met a Limousin scholar who talked the new Latinised French which Ronsard and his friends were endeavouring to introduce.

The language of clerks and scholars of the middle ages was Latin, so that had the student whom Pantagruel saluted answered in that tongue, there would have been nothing extraordinary, but he answered in the new pedantic jargon, consisting of Latin words with French terminations, thus:—

"'My friend,' asked Pantagruel, 'whence comest thou?'

"The scholar answers him, 'From the alme, inclyte and celebre academy, which is vocitated Lutetia.'

"'What is the meaning of this?' asked Pantagruel, astonished at these unknown sounds.

"'He means,' answered his friends, 'from Paris.'

"'And how,' continued Pantagruel, 'how do you spend your time there, you students of Paris?'

"'We transfretate the Sequane at the dilucul and crepuscul: we deambulate by the compites and quadrives of the urb; we despumate the Latial verbocination; and, like verisimilar amorabons, we captat the benevolence of the omnijugal, omniform, and omnigenal feminine sex. We cauponisate in the meritorious taberns of the Pineapple, the Castle, the Magdalene, and the Mule, fair vervecine spatules perforated with petrosil. If by fortune there be rarity or penury of pecune in our marsupies, and they are exhausted of ferruginean metal, for the shot we demit our codices, and vestiments opignerated, prestolating the Tabellaries to some of the penates and patriotic lares.'

"'What devilish language is this?' cries the astonished Pantagruel; 'I think thou art some kind of heretic.'

"'My Lord, no, for libentissimally, as soon as it illucesceth any minutule slice of the day, I demigrate into one of these fair architected minsters, and there irrorating myself with lustral water, I mumble off certain missic precations of our sacrificuls, and submurmurating my horary precules, I absterge my anime from its nocturnal inquinations. I revere the olympicols. I latrially venere the supernal astripotent. I dilige and redame my proxims. I observe the decalogical precepts, and according to the facultatule of my vires, I do not discede from them one unguicule. Nevertheless it is veriform, because Mammon doth not supergurgitate anything in my locules, that I am somewhat rare and lent to supererogate the elemosynes to those egents who hostially queritate their stipe.'"

By the aid of a Latin dictionary this rigmarole may be made out. It is a parody of the new French sought to be introduced by Ronsard and his friends. We have

seen that the school never forgave Rabelais, but nursed their wrath till the time came for writing malicious epitaphs.

Pantagruel in a rage takes him by the throat with a clutch so tremendous that the unhappy scholar was ever after afflicted with a continual desire to drink, which, unhappily, brought him to an early grave. "A work of divine vengeance," says Rabelais, "showing us that we should, as said Augustus, shun unknown words with as much heedfulness as pilots of ships use to avoid rocke at sea."

From Orleans, after spoiling all the wine of the city by carrying the big bell of St Aignan through the streets, young Pantagruel travels to Paris, which he considers a good place to live in, but bad to die in. While there he visited the "great and stately" library of St Victor, an unfortunate collection of medieval scholastic books at which the new scholars were never tired of scoffing. Rabelais gives the catalogue at length.

It must be owned that a list of titles, written to satirise and bring into deeper contempt than that in which they already languished the books on which former generations had spent their lives and labours, does not offer much prospect of amusement to the modern reader, and yet the extravagance, the overflowing imagination, and the boundless copiousness displayed in the list, have preserved the humour of this old-fashioned catalogue, so that the old monastic collection of rubbish known as the Library of St Victor seems familiar to us who have never seen and laughed at it. Many of the titles, and those not the least absurd, are titles of real books, copies of which may still be found

forgotten and dust-covered in corners of old libraries. The following are among the least extravagant:—

The Mustard-pot of Penitence.
The Boots of Patience.
The Reverend Father Lubin's Three Books de croquendis lardonibus.
The Spectacles of Rome-Trampers.
Majoris de modo faciendi boudinos.
The Pleasures of Monastic Life.
The Potations of Potative Bishops.
Godemarre of the Five Mendicant Orders.
Merlinus Coccaius de patriâ diabolorum.
Pantofla decretorum.
Beda de optimitate triparum.
The Mummery of Ghosts and Will-o'-the-Wisps.
The Chimney-Sweeper of Astrology.

While at Paris, Pantagruel addressed himself seriously to study, and received a letter from his father Gargantua, which is a most grave and serious exhortation to study, and a most eloquent eulogium on learning. It is not the king who speaks, it is the author who for thirty years has been learning incessantly, who has never ceased from congratulating himself on being born in a time so favourable to scholars, and in days no longer, as those of the previous generation, still "in darkness, and still feeling the infelicity and calamity of the Goths." Observe that while in the finished scheme Gargantua is stated vaguely to have studied six hours a-day, in this earlier letter the very subjects are prescribed.

"That which I now write unto thee is not so much that thou shouldst live in a course of virtue as that thou shouldst rejoice in so living and having lived, and shouldst cheer thy-

self up with the like resolution for the future. To the perfection of this undertaking thou mayest easily remember that I have spared nothing, but have helped thee as if I had no other treasure in the world, only to see thee once in my life absolute and perfect, as well in virtue, honesty, and valour, as in all liberal knowledge, and so to leave thee after my death as a mirror representing the person of myself, thy father; and if not so excellent and altogether as I wish thee to be, yet such indeed is my desire. . . . When I studied, the time was not so convenient to letters as it is at present, and I had not the same abundance of teachers as you have had; dark too were the times, and feeling still something of the infelicity and calamity of the Goths, who brought destruction upon all good literature. But, by divine goodness, light and dignity have been in my age restored to letters. Now is every kind of teaching revived—languages introduced—Greek, without which it is a shame that any one should call himself a scholar, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Latin. Correct and elegant printed books are in use,—an invention of divine inspiration, just as, on the other hand, artillery is of diabolical inspiration. All the world is full of scholars, of learned tutors, and of rich libraries; and henceforth it will be no longer possible to find in place or in company one who is not trained in Minerva's workshop. . . . Wherefore, my son, I admonish thee that thou employ thy youth in profiting by study and by virtue. I mean, and I desire that thou learn the languages perfectly: first Greek, as Quintilian desires; secondly, Latin; and then thirdly, Hebrew for the Holy Scriptures; and Chaldee and Arabic likewise, and for the forming of thy style in Greek after Plato, and in Latin after Cicero. Let there be no history which thou shalt not have ready in thy memory, in which thou wilt be aided by the geographies of those who have written on this subject. Of the liberal arts, Geometry, Arithmetic, and Music, I gave thee some taste when thou wert yet a little boy of five or six years. Proceed further in the remainder. As for Astronomy, study all the rules thereof. Pass by, nevertheless, divining astrology, and the art of Lully, as

being nothing else but abuses and vanities. As for the Civil Law, of that I would have thee to know the texts by heart, and then to compare them with Philosophy.

"Now, in matter of the knowledge of the works of nature, I would have thee give thyself curiously, that there be no sea, river, nor fountain, of which thou dost not know the fishes; all the fowls of the air; all the trees and shrubs of the forest; all the herbs of the earth; all the metals that are hidden within the bowels of the earth; the precious stones of all the east and south. Let nothing of all these be unknown to thee. . . . And at some hours of the day begin to visit the Holy Scriptures: first, in Greek, the New Testament, with the Epistles of the Apostles; and the Old Testament in Hebrew. In brief, let me see thee an abyss of knowledge: for, from henceforward, as thou growest great and becomest a man, thou must part from this tranquillity and rest of study; thou must learn chivalry, warfare, and the exercises of the field, the better whereby to defend my house and to succour our friends in all their needs against the assaults of evil-doers."

This is the first time in "Pantagruel"—that is, in the whole work chronologically — that Rabelais is really serious. Considering that six important chapters in "Gargantua" are devoted to the question of education, it is manifest how strongly the necessity of a more enlightened system was impressed upon his mind. It is worthy of note, too, that this complex and encyclopædic education is not designed to fit a man for the office of professor, scholar, or divine, but is proposed as an introduction to the active and practical duties of a prince. Nothing fits a man for the administration of affairs, Rabelais would have said, so much as the accumulation of knowledge. The prejudice which in all countries exists against statesmen who are also philosophers is founded in the distrust of speculative philosophy. Compare, however, the in-

junctions in Gargantua's letter with the curriculum instituted by Ponocrates. The former foreshadow the practical good sense of the latter. One feels that a prince so brought up, so trained in all the wisdom of ancients and moderns, so practised in all bodily exercises, so drilled to consider no mechanical industry unworthy of his study, has received all that can be done for one who has to rule as well as to reign. The rest depends upon natural ability.

It may be objected, of course, that it is utterly impossible for such a king as Gargantua, who has behaved like the foolish giant that he was, in the matter of the death of his wife and the birth of his son, to write such a letter. Such incongruities, however, are entirely after the manner of Rabelais. When he wrote "Gargantua" as an introduction to "Pantagruel" he forgot in exactly the same way the blubbering and emotional giant in the first chapter of the latter, and gave the young Gargantua such a training as should have made him the wisest and the best of princes — such a prince as the world has prayed for since kings were first invented.

Panurge, the incomparable Panurge, who is introduced at this point, demands a chapter to himself. On one point, however, we must be clear. Panurge, large as is the part he plays in the book, is not the hero of Rabelais. The hero, whether of "Gargantua" or of "Pantagruel," is always the king. He it is who, by right of his exalted position and his virtues, occupies the greatest space on the canvas. Whenever there is danger of his being forgotten he is restored, by the simplest trick in the world, as the central figure. He becomes a giant again.

We need not delay over the case which Pantagruel is called upon to hear and decide, just as Gargantua (p. 58) heard the appeal in the case of the bells. It is a parody on the interminable pleadings, the inability to state a case clearly, which belonged to the courts of law. The case referred to the decision of Pantagruel had been considered by the Parliament of Paris, the Grand Council, and professors of France, England, and Italy. After forty-six weeks of deliberation they could make nothing of it. And as for the documents and papers connected with the case, they amounted in all to four donkey-loads. These, however, Pantagruel burns, and orders the case to be set forth *de novo*.

It has been found possible in our time to present a parody on the procedure of courts. It is never, and in no country, difficult to present what seems to be hardly a caricature of the advocate's long-winded pleadings and a judge's capricious, arbitrary, and opinionated interruptions. But pedantry in its pseudo-classical form has long since left both bar and bench. Counsel and judge no longer rely upon a fancied analogy between a mythological case in Ovid and a real case of modern law. It will therefore be well to dismiss both the arguments and the decision. This Pantagruel delivers in a style corresponding to that of the advocates. Neither pleading nor decision is for three lines together intelligible. Yet so great was the rapture of the counsellors and other doctors of law, and so much were they ravished with admiration at the wisdom of a prince so young, that they fell into a trance for the space of three hours, and would have so continued until the present day had not certain good people brought vinegar and rose-water to

bring them round again "to their former understanding, for which God be thanked everywhere."

While Pantagruel was living in great joy and happiness at Paris, diverted by the tricks of Panurge—as yet Friar John does not appear upon the scene—he learned that his father has been translated to the land of the fairies, and that the Dipsodes, taking advantage of there being no king, had invaded his country of Utopia, and besieged the city of Amaurotes. The prince instantly sets out, accompanied by all his suit, to repel the invaders. They take ship at Honfleur—in "Gargantua" the kingdom of Utopia is in or about Touraine—and sail to the Canary Islands, to Madeira, and by Senegal, round the Cape of Good Hope, and after passing the islands of Nowhere and Nothing, arrive at the port of Utopia, at three leagues' distance from the city of the Amaurotes.

The enemy, under the command of Anarchus and his captain, Loupgarou, with three hundred giants, are dispersed; there is a combat between Loupgarou and Pantagruel, in which the former is slain with all his giants. It is singular, but quite after the manner of Rabelais, to find in the midst of the maddest extravagance a most solemn and grave prayer offered by Pantagruel immediately before the battle.

The victory was dashed at first with mourning for Epistemon, who was found with his head cut off, but the body was warm. Panurge undertook to restore him. This he effected by the simple method of putting the head on again very carefully, and sewing it round with fifteen or sixteen stitches. As soon as Epistemon began to breathe, they gave him a large glass of strong white wine, after which he grew rapidly well, save for a little

hoarseness during the next three weeks, and a dry cough for which the only remedy was continual drinking.

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered he told the story of what he had seen in the nether regions.

A descent into Hades is no new thing in literature. There are the purely poetical descents, as those of Virgil, Æneas, and Dante; the medieval stories, meant to be taken literally, like that of St Patrick's cave on Lough Derg, where was the entrance to Purgatory; the medieval stories which are satirical; the many classical stories, especially that to which Rabelais is most largely indebted, the 'Necyomancie' of Lucian. According to the experience of Epistemon, things have been grossly misrepresented. The wicked are not treated with the cruelty usually believed; they are only transformed into some new conditions of life which shall form the greatest contrast to their former grandeur. Alexander the Great, for instance, is a journeyman tailor who gains a poor livelihood by darning and repairing old clothes; Xerxes bawls mustard along the street; Sylla is a ferryman; Cyrus has become a cowkeeper; Priam vends old rags; Lancelot of the Lake skins dead horses; King Baldwin of Jerusalem is a churchwarden; Pope Alexander the Sixth is a ratcatcher; Trajan fishes for frogs; Nero very appropriately plays a fiddle along the streets; Cleopatra retails onions, and Dido mushrooms. On the other hand, the philosophers, and those who had been in this world beggars, are there great people, — among them Epistemon saw Diogenes, dressed in purple and with a great golden sceptre; and Epictetus, gallantly apparelled after the French fashion, sitting under a pleasant arbour, dancing and singing with gentlewomen.

As for the captive Anarchus, it is suggested that he had better be taught such an art as will be useful to him in the next world, since that is regulated by contraries. They therefore dress him in rags, teach him to hawk green sauce about the street, and marry him to an old lantern-woman.

It is a pity that the book did not stop here. But Rabelais unfortunately remembers, which we would fain forget, that he has a giant to deal with, and Pantagruel has to support the character. A story is borrowed from Lucian's 'True Voyage,' which does service for the occasion. There is nothing in it but pure extravagance, and, together with the chapter which follows, is tedious.

Rabelais here concludes the First Book of "Pantagruel." He promises to follow it up with a crowd of adventures for the Second Book. Needless to say, not one of his promises are kept.

"If you say to me, Master, it would seem that you are not very wise in writing for us these flim-flam stories, and pleasant fooleries,—I reply to you, that you are not much wiser to spend your time in reading them. Nevertheless, if you read them for your pastime, as in manner of pastime I made them, you and I are more worthy of pardon than a great rabble of pretenders and hypocrites who disguise themselves like monks to deceive the world. For while they give the common people to understand that they are busied about nothing but contemplation and devotion in fastings and maceration of the flesh, on the contrary, they make good cheer. *Et Curios simulant, sed Bacchanalia vivunt.* . . . Fly from these men, abhor and hate them as much as I do, and upon my word you will find the benefit of it. And if you desire to be good Pantagruelists—that is to say, to live in peace, joy, health, making yourselves always merry—never trust men who always peep through one hole."

CHAPTER V.

PANURGE.

THE Third Book of this romance appeared with the king's privilege in 1546, thirteen years after the First of "Pantagruel." In 1547 Francis died; and, as we have seen, the reaction set in. But the mischief was done; the Sorbonne could not make the people forget what they had read; and this was nothing less than the most spirited book of modern literature. Other writers had nobler themes; no others had more fitting objects of satire. Others, men like Erasmus, D'Aubigné, and Von Hutten, attacked, each in his own way, the follies of the age. No one except Rabelais, and he only in this Third Book, attacked with the light laugh of one who ridiculed without bitterness, and preserved at the same high level his good temper, his good spirits, and his *verve*. In this Book he feels the fulness of his strength; he discards his troublesome giant machinery; Pantagruel assumes the external proportions of a man; and the author, proud of his work and himself, drops the anagram of Alcofribas Nasier, and assumes his own name. I call this chapter "Panurge," because the book, save for one brief episode, is entirely occupied with the adventures and exploits of that hero.

In the preface to this volume, Rabelais compares himself with Diogenes, who, when the Corinthians, threatened with instant attack from Philip, began in the greatest haste to prepare for battle, girded up his cloak, tucked up his sleeves, and carried his tub outside the city, where, in great vehemency of spirit, he began

"To turn it, veer it, wheel it, frisk it, jumble it, shuffle it, huddle it, tumble it, hurry it, jolt it, justle it, overthrow it, evert it, invert it, subvert it, overturn it, beat it, thwack it, bump it, batter it, knock it, thrust it, push it, jerk it, shock it, shake it, toss it, throw it, overthrow it, upside down, topsy-turvy, tread it, trample it, stamp it, tap it, ting it, ring it, tingle it, towl it, sound it, resound it, stop it, shut it, unbung it, close it, unstopple it. . . . Which when his friends had seen, and asked him why he did so toil his body, perplex his spirit, and torment his tub, the philosopher's answer was that, not being employed in any other charge by the Republic, he thought it expedient to thunder and storm it so tempestuously upon his tub, that, amongst a people so fervently busy, and earnest at work, he alone might not seem a loitering slug and lazy fellow."[1]

This needs no explanation, far less the exhortation to drink which follows in the maddest Rabelaisian. Let us at once proceed to the first chapter. "Having despatched this point, let us return to the barrel, with 'Up, my lads, to the wine.'"

Let us remark that the rollicking merriment, the exuberance of animal spirits, which lights up these pages, belongs to a man of sixty-three. At that age there is no note of sadness or disappointment. The writer is as full of hope as any boy of twenty, and as full of gaiety. There was one reason, at least, as we

[1] Urquhart's Translation.

have seen, why the youthful heart of Rabelais was prolonged to sixty—his youth only began at forty. He had had no time as yet to feel the bitterness of disappointment; he still believed in men, in the future, in the glorious prospects of liberty and learning. When, six years later, he comes forward with his Fourth Book, we shall see that he has been aged, not by years, which could destroy the powers of his body but not his cheerfulness, but by the failure of things he had looked for, by the judicial murder of friends, and by the shadow of that impending conflict—Rabelais had little sympathy with either side—which was to end in the annihilation of free thought in his country.

Pantagruel, having fairly conquered the Land of Dipsodie—one wonders why Rabelais took the trouble to revive that old story—transported a colony of Utopians to people and cultivate the country, most of which was a desert, and to retain the rebellious natives within the bounds of obedience. As for his own people, he had no fear that they would depart from their fidelity; for indeed the Utopians sucked in loyalty with their mothers' milk, so humane and so mild was the government of their king. After only a few days of conversation with their new friends, the Dipsodes became as loyal and as good subjects, regretting only that they had not sooner arrived at the knowledge of the good Pantagruel.

"You will note therefore here, my drinkers, that the true way of holding and preserving countries newly conquered is not, as has been the erroneous opinion of certain tyrannical spirits, to their own loss and dishonour, by pillaging, forcing, oppressing, ruining, vexing, and governing with rods of iron.

. . . Osiris, the great king of the Egyptians, conquered the whole earth, not so much by force of arms, as by easing the people of their troubles, teaching them how to live well and healthily, with good laws, affability, and benefits."

This advice belongs to that kind of moral teaching which nobody disputes. It would be admitted to be good by every country under the sun. And yet we continue to read of Poland, Circassia, and other places. If no good teaching is to be abandoned until the world at large has incorporated it in its daily and habitual life, then these maxims of Rabelais may still be considered useful to remember.

His conquests thus fairly set in order, Rabelais was able to return to the Panurge whom he had created thirteen years before, and who had been growing in his brain until this one creation threatened to overshadow all the rest. And, in fact, except the stately figure of the king, who is always present, the stage is henceforth chiefly occupied by Panurge and Friar John.

The incomparable Panurge appears, then, first in the earlier Book. The manner in which Pantagruel meets him is in this wise:—

"One day Pantagruel, walking without the city towards the Abbey of Saint Antoine, conversing and philosophising with his people and certain scholars, met a man fair of stature and well proportioned in all the members of his body, but piteously wounded in several parts, and in such miserable guise that he seemed to have escaped from the dogs, or rather resembled an apple-picker of Le Perche. When Pantagruel saw him yet afar off, he said to his assistants, 'See you yon man who comes by the road of the Charenton Bridge? By my faith, he is only poor by fortune. I assure you, from his physiognomy, that Nature has produced him of rich and noble lineage.'"

He then accosts the stranger, with his princely courtesy, and offers him assistance. Panurge, for it is he, answers successively in German, Arabic, Italian, English, Biscayan, Breton, Spanish, Danish, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. "Dea! my friend," cried Pantagruel, at last, "can you not speak French?" "Yes, very well, sir," replied the stranger. "It is, thank God, my maternal and natural tongue, for I was born and brought up in Touraine, the Garden of France."

Taken into Pantagruel's household, and refreshed by a long rest, with copious eating and drinking, Panurge proceeds to tell the story of his escape from the Turks, "without one word of falsehood:"—

"The rascal Turks had broached me on a spit, larded like a rabbit, for I was so thin that otherwise my flesh would have made bad eating, and in this manner they began to roast me alive. Now while they were roasting me I recommended myself to the grace divine, having in remembrance the good Saint Lawrence; and I trusted continually in God, that He would deliver me from that torment, which was done very strangely. For . . . the roaster by the divine will fell fast asleep. . . . Then I took between my teeth a brand by the end where it was not burned, and I threw it into his lap; and another I threw as well as I could under a camp-bed near the chimney, on which was the straw mattress of master roaster. Immediately the fire caught the straw, and from the straw the bed, and from the bed the ceiling, which was covered with fir. But the good thing was that the fire which I threw into the rascal roaster's lap burned his gown, so that he started up and cried at the window as loud as he could, 'Dal baroth! Dal baroth!' which means *Fire! Fire!* Then he came straight to me, to throw me into the fire, and to that purpose cut the bandages off my hands and feet. But the master of the house, hearing the cry of fire, and smelling the smoke of the street when he was walking with other

Bashaws and Musafys, ran as hard as he could to give help and carry off the valuables.

"As soon as he arrived, he seized the spit on which I was spitted, and killed my roaster stiff and dead. True it is that in drawing the spit from me I fell to the ground near the gridirons, and my fall did me a little harm, but not much, for the larding of bacon saved me. Then, my Bashaw seeing that the case was desperate, and that his house was burned without remission, and all his property lost, gave himself up to all his devils, calling nine times on Grilgoth, Astaroth, Rappalus, and Gribouillis.

"Seeing which, I had more than five pennyworth of fear, thinking, should the devils come and carry off the madman, would they be likely sort of people to carry me off too? So I made the sign of the cross, crying ἅγιος ἀθάνατος ὁ Θέος, and none came. Seeing which, my villain Bashaw tried to kill himself with my spit; but it was not sharp enough, and push as hard as he would, he profited nothing. Then I came to him, saying, 'Master, you lose your time; you will never kill yourself this way: perhaps you will do yourself some harm of which you will languish all the days of your life among the doctors. Now, if you like, I will kill you right off, so that you will feel nothing at all. You may trust me, for I have killed plenty of folk who felt themselves all the better for it afterwards.'

"'Ah! my friend,' he said, 'do it, I pray thee, and I will give thee my purse with 600 seraphs in it, and diamonds and rubies of the finest.'

"'Where are they?' asked Epistemon.

"'By St John!' said Panurge, 'they are far enough off now if they keep on travelling.' But 'where are last year's snows?' That was all that Villon of Paris cared to ask.

"'Go on,' said Pantagruel, 'that we know how you treated your Bashaw.'

"'As an honest man,' said Panurge, 'I do not lie in one single word. I bound him with an old pair of pantaloons that I found half burned, and I tied him up hands and feet,

so that he could not even kick. Then I passed my spit through his throat, and hanged him up on two iron hooks. Then I lit a great fire below him, and flamed up my lord, resting the spit as they do to herrings hanging in the chimney to be dried. Then I took his purse and a little javelin, and ran away. When I came down into the street, I found everybody running with water to put out the fire. And seeing me thus half roasted, they naturally had pity on me, and threw water over me, and joyously refreshed me. . . . And note that this roasting entirely cured me of a sciatica to which I had been subject more than seven years, on the side on which my roaster let me burn when he went to sleep. Thus did I escape, gallant and gay, *et vive la rotisserie!*'"

These and other experiences of Panurge are narrated in a spirit of pure gaiety and reckless extravagance. The fun is, it must be confessed, of the brutal order; but what can we look for in the sixteenth century? In fact, that kind of jocularity which is aroused by the sufferings, humiliation, or even the death, of one's friends, forms the staple of the Rabelaisian fun, just as it does in the "Fabliaux" of his predecessors, and the "Contes" of his contemporaries. As regards the adventure I have just quoted, it was entirely in the spirit of the time. It seemed quite natural to the readers of Rabelais that a Turk should hang up a Christian to be roasted alive, and equally natural that the Christian should turn the tables upon his torturer.

Attached to the household of Pantagruel, Panurge begins over again, with as keen a relish as if he were still a student, the tricks and pranks of his former life. It would be an excellent contribution to the many lost or unwritten chapters of fiction, were some one to reconstruct the earlier years of Panurge. We shall never

know how or why he fell among the Turks; we might, indeed, from the subsequent development of his character, be led to conjecture that he had never left the limits of France at all, and invented the whole story to please the good-natured and wonder-loving prince who was to entertain him. It is not difficult to make such a reconstruction. Eliminate from the confessions of Villon those *égarements* in the direction of burglary, fraud, and pillage, which led that poet to misery and his companions to Montfaucon—preserve the poverty, the recklessness, the makeshift-life, the debts, the carousing and singing, the wanderings in the heart of Paris, the chats with the market-women of the Halles, and the troop of comrades all subject to the same malady—

"Lack of money is grief without its like."

Then read the story of the struggles of those two poor scholars, Amyot and Guillaume Postel. See how a pauper managed to get learning: mark the noble enthusiasm for learning. Graft upon the turbulence of Villon the ardour of Amyot,—and you have the history which Rabelais has withheld from us of Panurge's earlier years.

Panurge, at the time of his introduction to Pantagruel, was of a middle stature, neither too great nor too little; his nose was slightly aquiline, made like the handle of a razor; he was about five-and-thirty years of age: a gallant and proper man in his carriage. He had sixty-three ways of finding money at need. Of these his favourite method was some way of secret thieving. "An evil-doer, a cheat, a drinker, a vagabond, a libertine if ever there was one in Paris:"

"For all the rest, the best son in the world."

Besides the tricks which he played for his livelihood, he was continually contriving some new device against the sergeants of the watch. On one occasion he got together three or four rustics, made them drink like Templars in the evening, then took them out to the College of Navarre, where he waited till the watch were coming up the street. Then they took a tumbrel and drove it as hard as they could down the hill, so that the poor watch were tumbled over each other like pigs. At another time he laid a train of gunpowder at a certain place where the watch were to pass, firing it at the moment they were coming. "Thus his delight was to see their grace in running away, thinking that St Anthony's fire was in their legs." He took also enormous pleasure in playing tricks upon the Masters of Arts and Doctors of the university, into whose hoods he would drop loathsome and evil-smelling compounds. He loved to whip the pages whom he met in the street carrying wine to their masters. In his coat, which contained six-and-twenty little pockets, were sharp penknives for cutting purses; bottles of verjuice, which he threw in people's eyes; burs stuck with goose-feathers, which he dropped on the head and robes of honest people; little horns and quills full of fleas, which he poured down the necks of young ladies as they knelt in church; hooks and crochets, with which he secretly hooked together men and women in church, especially those who were well dressed; squibs with tinder, and matches for lighting them; burning-glasses with which (always at church) he drove people nearly mad; needle and thread, by means of which a good many tricks are possible; a bottle of oil, with which he would smear

the dresses of those who were especially well dressed; and powder, with which he made ladies sneeze for four hours together without stopping, a thing which mightily amused him.

One of his methods of getting money was by the purchase of indulgences. These could only be obtained by depositing certain alms in boxes kept in the churches for the purpose. Panurge piously put in a small coin and drew out a great one, so that after the morning's round among the churches he would find himself in possession of "ten or twelve" little bags full of money. But although he had threescore and three ways of finding money, he had two hundred and fourteen of spending it, so that he was continually poor.

Panurge first exhibits that craftiness of his, which amounted to genius, in the great controversy which he maintained with the English philosopher, who disputed only by signs. His name was Thaumast, "the wonderful," and he had left England and his friends to see Pantagruel, after the example of the Queen of Sheba, who came from the utmost borders of the East to see Solomon; or that of Anacharsis, who travelled from Scythia to see Solon; or that of Plato, who went to Egypt to see the Magicians; or that of Apollonius of Tyana, who travelled all the way to India to see Hiarchas; or those many studious persons who came to Rome in order to converse with Livy. But Thaumast proposed not only to confer, but to dispute with Pantagruel. For the first and only time that accomplished prince fell into a serious doubt as to his own powers: and after reading all the books carefully, enumerated by the learned author, which treat of signs, he consented to

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Panurge's advice, and intrusted the conduct of the contest much to him.

The story is not new—little except Panurge, Friar John, Pantagruel, and the Divine Bottle is new in Rabelais—but it is told in the best style of the author. The disputants are not to speak. They begin, at least Thaumast begins, by a solemn asseveration that his desire is not to dispute contentiously, but solely to resolve doubts and to pursue truth.

"Everybody then taking heed, in great silence, the Englishman lifted his two hands separately, clenching the ends of his fingers in the form that at Chinon they call the fowl's tail. Then he struck them together by the nails four times. Then he opened them and struck one flat upon the other with a clash once; after which, joining them as above, he struck twice, and four times afterwards on opening them. Then he placed them, joined and extended, the one above the other, seeming to pray God devoutly.

"Panurge suddenly moved his right hand in the air, placed the right-hand thumb at the right-hand nostril, holding the four fingers stretched out and arrayed in parallel lines with the point of the nose,[1] shutting the left eye entirely, and winking with the right, making a profound depression with eyebrow and eyelid. Next, he raised aloft the left with a strong clenching and extension of the four fingers and elevation of the thumb, and held it in line directly corresponding with the position of the right, the distance between the two being a cubit and a half. This done, in the like manner he lowered towards the ground both hands, and finally held them in the midst as if aiming straight at the Englishman's nose. 'And if Mercury,' said the Englishman. 'You have spoken, mask,' cried Panurge."

[1] "Estenduz et serrez par leur ordre en ligne parallèle à la pinne du nez." This is difficult to understand. Rabelais means, perhaps, that the line formed by joining the tips of the three last fingers was parallel with the line of the nose.

We need not follow in further detail the steps of this wonderful controversy, in which all that the outsiders understood was, that for every sign exhibited by Thaumast, Panurge had another more complex and more mystic. The Englishman at last confesses himself beaten.

"My lords, well may I now utter the words of the Gospel, 'Et ecce plusquam Salomon hic!' You have here an incomparable treasure before you, in the person of the Lord Pantagruel, whose renown has drawn me from the very end of England to confer with him on certain insoluble problems, whether of magic, alchemy, cabala, geomancy, and philosophy. But at present I am indignant with renown, which seems to me envious against him, for it does not report the thousandth part of the worth that is in him. You have seen how his disciple alone has contented me, and has told me more than I asked; he has opened up to me abundantly, and at the same time solved, other inestimable doubts. In which, I can assure you, that he has disclosed the true well and abyss of an encyclopædia, and that in a way of which I thought I should never find a man who knew the first elements—namely, when one disputed by signs without saying a word or half a word. But presently I shall write down all that we have said and resolved, so that it may not be thought that we have been fooling. And you may judge what the master would have been, seeing that the disciple has displayed such powers. *Car non est discipulus super magistrum.* . . . On departing from there, Pantagruel took Thaumast to dine with him. And you may believe that they drank unbuttoned. Blessed lady! how they drank! And the flagons went, and they called out, 'Draw, give, page, wine, reach, in the devil's name, reach.' Not one but drank twenty or thirty hogsheads. And do you know how? *Sicut terra sine aqua;* for it was summer weather, and all the more were they thirsty. With regard to the exposition of the propositions advanced by Thaumast, and the signification of the signs

which they used in disputing, I would set that forth according to their relation the one to the other; but they tell me that Thaumast has printed a great book in London, wherein he explains the whole, leaving nothing omitted."

Such, certain details omitted, is Panurge in the First Book of Pantagruel. When, thirteen years later, the author again takes up the character, we find him still consistent with his first conception. Panurge in the last three books is the same as in the first. The figure of Pantagruel loses almost altogether its gigantic proportions, and assumes the likeness of a great and wise king. Friar John, lightly sketched in "Gargantua," becomes human. New characters are introduced. Panurge alone remains the same, only the hand of the limner is firmer, the features of his creation are clearer, the figure more distinct. Such as he was at the beginning, and as we have drawn him from the first account, so he remains. What the author intended to delineate we will consider in the last chapter.

Let us now continue the history as given in the Third Book.

While Pantagruel was arranging for the government of his newly conquered territory, Dipsodie, he made Panurge Lord of Salmigondin, an estate producing a revenue of 6,789,106,789 royals certain, besides a varying income arising from periwinkles and locusts, which might amount to 2,435,768 or 2,435,769 gold *moutons* every year.

Panurge at once began to dissipate and spend this princely property, insomuch that within fourteen days he had squandered the whole revenue for the next three whole years. He built no monasteries, founded no colleges, endowed no hospitals, he simply threw it all away in feasting, cutting down woods, burning great trunks for

the sake of the timber, borrowing money, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating his corn in the blade. In fourteen days—a short fortnight—he wasted three years' revenue! Was there ever such splendid prodigality?

Pantagruel, advised of this extravagance, gently remonstrates with his follower, and tells him that if he continues to live at this rate it will be impossible, or at least extremely difficult, to make him rich. "Rich!" cries Panurge. "Was that your intention? Have you taken thought how to make me rich in this world? Think to live joyously. Let no other care, no other thought be received in the sanctosacred domicile of your celestial brain. . . . As for economy, everybody talks about it, but few know what it is." He goes on to defend his spendthrift habits. It is prudence, he says, to borrow, because who knows how long the world will last? It is an act of commutative justice to buy dear, on credit — and sell cheap, for ready money. It is an act of distributive justice to provide feasts and entertainments for young people. It is an act of fortitude to cut down great forests, the dens and strongholds of wolves and wild beasts, brigands and murderers. It is an act of temperance to eat the corn while it is still in the blade. As for being out of debt, that will come with the Greek calends. Then follows the famous eulogy of debt, the most eloquent speech of all those made by Panurge, and the one in greatest harmony with his character.

"The Lord forbid that I should be out of debt! After that, indeed, I should find no one to lend me a penny. Do you continually owe money to somebody. By him will God be always prayed to grant you a good, long, and happy life; and fearing to lose his debt, he will always speak well of you

in every company, will continually acquire for you new creditors, so that by them you may make payment, and with other people's earth you may fill up his ditch. When of old, in Gaul, by the institution of the Druids, the servants, slaves, and bondsmen were all burned alive at the funerals and obsequies of their lords and masters, had they not fear enough that their lords and masters should die? For, perforce, they were to die with them. Believe me, your creditors, with a still more fervent devotion, will beseech the Lord that you may live, and will fear that you may die. . . . Dea! in this one respect [of debts] I esteem myself worshipful, reverend, and formidable. For, against the opinion of all philosophers who say that out of nothing ariseth nothing, I, having nothing, nor any primary matter, have become a maker and creator. What have I created?—so many fair and jolly creditors. . . . Think you how glad I am when every morning I find myself surrounded by these creditors, so humble, so serviceable, and so copious of reverences. And I note how, if I bestow a more cheerful countenance to one than to another, the rascal thereupon thinks that he will be the first despatched, and valueth my smiles at the rate of ready money. . . . I have all my lifetime held debt to be as an union and bond of the heavens with the earth, an unique cement of the human race; yea, of such efficacy, that the whole human race would perish without it."

He goes on to represent a world in which there should be no debts and no debtors. It is a fine and striking picture of the interdependence of all things in the universe. The planets will no longer follow their courses. Jupiter, in no way connected with Saturn, will thrust him out of his place; Saturn and Mars will unite and throw everything into confusion; Mercury, beholden to no one, will cease to serve any; Venus will no longer lend, and therefore will cease to be venerated; the

moon will remain dark—why should the sun lend her his light, or the earth his heat? The stars, which will no longer be fed with exhalations—"proved by Heraclitus, the Stoics, and Cicero to be their natural nourishment"—will cease to rain their friendly influence upon mankind; water will not be made of the earth; the air shall not be made of water; fire shall not be made of air. There shall be no rain, no light, no seasons, no wind. As for mankind, the earth will be no better than a vast dog-kennel; one man will not salute another; one man will not help another—why should he? nobody has lent him money. Faith, hope, charity, will be banished—men will become as wolves.

On the other hand, let us consider what sort of a world would that be in which every one lends and every one borrows.

"Oh, what harmony will there be among the regular motions of the skies! Methinks I hear it as well as ever Plato did. What sympathy between the elements! How Nature will delight in her works and productions! Ceres charged with wheat, Bacchus with wine, Flora with flowers, Pomona with fruits, Juno with her serene, healthful, and delightful air. I am lost in the contemplation. Among men, peace, love, affection, fidelity, repose, banquets, feasting, joy, gladness, gold, silver, small money, chains, rings, merchandise will run from hand to hand. No lawsuits, no war, no contention; none will be usurer there, none miserly, none frugal, none refusing to lend. Great heavens! will it not be the age of gold—the Saturnian reign? the idea of the Olympic regions, in which all other virtues cease, charity alone reigns, rules, dominates, and triumphs? All shall be good, all shall be fair, all shall be just. O happy world! O folk of the happy world—O twice, thrice, and four times happy! Methinks I am already there."

And then he shows, speaking as a physician and an anatomist, how in the microcosm—the little world of the human body—all the members work for each other, one to the other looking for support and sustenance, and this in no niggardly spirit, but joyfully and eagerly. No doubt, as in his astronomy so in his anatomy, modern science finds Rabelais in error. Yet the leading thought is just and true, and to his generation, at least, it was new.

"Nature hath created man only for lending and borrowing: the harmony of the skies is no greater than that of her own governance. The intention of the founder of this microcosm is to entertain in it the soul, which has been placed in the body as guest, and the life. The life consists in the blood: blood is the seat of the soul; wherefore one labour alone exercises the world—namely, to make blood continually. In this forge all the members are in their own office, and their hierarchy is such that incessantly one borrows from the other, one lends to the other, one is debtor to the other. The material suitable to be transmuted into blood is given by nature: it is bread and wine. All kinds of aliment are comprised in these two. To procure them, to prepare them, to cook them, the hands toil, the feet walk, and carry the whole machine. The eyes lead all; the appetite gives warning to administer the food; the tongue tries it; the teeth chew it; the stomach receives and digests it. What joy, think you, exists among these officers when they see this rivulet of gold, this blood, which is others' sole maintenance? No greater is the joy of alchemists when, after long labours, great care and expenses, they see the metals transmuted in their furnaces. . . . Vertuguoy! I drown, I am lost, I stray, when I enter into the profound abyss of this world, always lending, always owing. Believe that it is a divine thing to lend, an heroic virtue to owe."

It is characteristic of Rabelais to find this solid and

serious teaching rising out of the fact that Panurge is a spendthrift. It is equally characteristic that such a discourse is inconsistent with the other sayings and doings of the speaker. In the same way Friar John, the burly, ignorant monk, was permitted to be the founder of the glorious Abbey of Thelema.

The chapters on debt illustrate the parable in the prologue to "Gargantua" (p. 53). The writer has a thought; he does not state it in so many words—that is not his plan—he looks at it from different points of view, plays with it, decorates it with all possible illustrations of classical learning, science, and playful fancy, and leaves it as a riddle to be guessed by his readers. There is no great difficulty in guessing his riddles. Just as the planets rule and depend upon each other, and by this dependence the cosmic order is maintained; just as the organs of the body depend upon each other, and by this dependence life is preserved,—so men, in the social world, depend each upon the other, and owe their lives, their wealth, their service, to the sacred cause of humanity. Did Comte teach more? Yet the beauty and excellence of Rabelais must be judged in reference to the time. The chapters on debt and interdependence, not even now commonplace, were as fresh and sweet to his contemporaries, weary with the controversies and confusions of the time, as a draught of cold water to a traveller in the desert.

The discourse on debt finished, we at once proceed to the great question, in the solution of which the rest of the book is almost entirely occupied. It is a question which, as we shall presently see, involves far more than is at first sight apparent, for it is, in this beginning,

only a doubt into which Panurge falls, as to whether he shall marry.

He began by fretting over the loss of his debts, which, we are told, were all paid off, and one day presented himself before Pantagruel in a complete change of costume. He now wore a long plain gown, of coarse brown cloth. He had assumed an ear-ring in which, instead of a jewel, was a black flea, richly set and encased; and he had tied, after the fashion of certain lawyers and doctors, a pair of spectacles to his cap. He explains that, as he is now out of debt, he intends to be as unpleasing in outward appearance as he possibly can be. His long coat, made after the fashion of a toga, and copied from the sculptures in Trajan's column, means that he longs to be at rest, and that he is weary of buff coats and the carrying of arms. And having donned the garb of peace, he inclines to take a wife.

"'My lord,' said Panurge, with a profound sigh, 'you have now heard my deliberation, which is about marriage. I beseech you, for the affection which you have for a long time borne me, give me your advice thereupon.'

"'Then,' answered Pantagruel, 'seeing you have so decreed and taken deliberation upon it, there is no need of any further talk. Remains only to put it into execution.'

"'Yea but,' quoth Panurge, 'I would be loath to act in the matter without your counsel.'

"'It is my judgment also,' said Pantagruel, 'and I advise you to it.'

"'Nevertheless,' said Panurge, 'if you thought that my better plan were to remain as I am, without undertaking cases of novelty, I should like better not to marry.'

"Said Pantagruel, 'Then do not marry.'

"'Nay,' continued Panurge, 'would you have me to remain

lonely as I am all my life without conjugal company? You know it is written *Væ soli!*—a single person never has such solace as one sees between married folks.'

"'Then marry, in the name of God,' said Pantagruel!"

This pleasantry is imitated from half-a-dozen different forms of the same story. It is found in one form among the stories of Poggio, and another in a sermon of the preacher Raulin, and since the time of Rabelais it has been repeatedly recast, especially by Molière in the "Mariage Forcé" and by Colin d'Harleville.

"Give me your counsel, I pray,
On a difficult point to decide:
I think, but with doubt, about taking a bride:
Shall I marry her—yea or nay?
'Good gossip, my counsel is—yea.'

But suppose that the wife—as she may—
Should turn out a scold or a shrew:
One would rage then—but what else to do?
Advise me, my friend, the best way.
'Good gossip, my counsel is—nay.'"

Panurge complains that this kind of advice does not advance his decision. Then Pantagruel suggests that recourse should be had to the *sortes Virgilianæ*, and in support of this counsel enumerates a long list of leading cases in which this kind of oracle is proved to have foreshadowed the future in a very remarkable manner. The most striking are the stories of Alexander Severus, who, trying his fortune at the lottery, chanced upon the line—

"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;"

and that of Pierre Amy, the ex-monk of Fontenay, who

with Rabelais, as we have seen, was encouraged to escape from the cloister by reading the line—

"Heu! fuge crudeles terras, fuge littus avarum."

They threw their dice in order to find what line in the page to take. The dice gave the numbers five, six, and five, which made sixteen in all. Accordingly they open the book at random and take the sixteenth line: it is—

"Nec Deus hunc mensa, Dea nec dignata cubile est."

This verse is interpreted by Pantagruel and Panurge in a manner wholly opposite. Not being able to agree, they consult the oracle a second time and read—

"Membra quatit, gelidusque coit formidine sanguis."

Pantagruel interprets the ominous prophecy of the husband, that his wife will beat him; Panurge, of the wife, that the husband will cudgel her if she vex him. Then a third time they consult the book:—

"Fœmineo prædæ, et spoliorum ardebat amore."

"This portends," said Pantagruel, "that she will steal your goods and rob you. Hence, according to the three lots, will be your foolish destiny: your wife will be unfaithful to you, you will be beaten, and you will be robbed." Panurge, on the other hand, reads the oracles in an entirely opposite sense. Seeing that they cannot agree on the interpretration of the *sortes Virgilianæ*, Pantagruel advises divination by dreams, as a thing sanctioned by high authorities. And here for the first time we observe that Friar John is one of the company of Pantagruel. He is not introduced: we are not told when he left the service of Gargantua; the author

merely remembers him, and makes him break into the conversation.

Panurge dreams that he has married a charming and beautiful wife, with whom his joy was incomparable. But while she flattered and caressed him, kissing him, and laying her hands upon his neck, she made pretty little horns upon his forehead, taking great pains to fix them there, as he remembered; and then the dream changed, and he became a tabor and she an owl.

Panurge himself interprets this dream to signify that by his marriage he will be furnished with plenty of all manner of goods. A different interpretation, which may easily be guessed, is adopted by his friends.

The Sibyl of Panzoust (a parish in Poitiers) is next consulted, with an equally vague and uncertain result. Every oracle in turn gives rise to a profusion of illustrations, anecdotes, and classical quotations. After the Sibyl follows divination by means of a deaf and dumb man, Naz-de-cabre by name. This is a reminiscence of Thaumast. The description of signs in which one can discern no meaning is tedious. Perhaps a dying poet—poets, we are told, generally become prophets when they draw near their latter end—may throw some light upon Panurge's future. And here Rabelais, after his fashion, becomes in the midst of his maddest vein grave and serious:—

"For as we, being upon a pier, and seeing afar off mariners and other travellers upon the ships on the high seas, consider them in silence only, and pray for their prosperous arrival; but when they approach the haven, then both with words and gestures we salute and congratulate them because they have arrived, as we ourselves, to a port of safety. Just so the

angels, heroes, and good demons, according to the doctrine of the Platonics, when they see mortals near unto death, as to a sure and salutary port, a port of repose and tranquillity, beyond the troubles and solicitudes of the world, salute them, console them, speak with them, and begin to communicate unto them the art of divination. . . . Let me only commemorate the learned and valiant knight, Guillaume du Bellay, late Seigneur of Langey, who died at the Mount of Tarara in the climacteric, or 63d year of his age, on the 10th of January 1543. The three or four hours before his decease he spent in vigorous speech, in tranquil and serene judgment, foretelling what we have since seen in part, and in part expect to arrive. Yet how absurd and strange seemed his prophecies at that time because there appeared no cause or any prognostic sign of what he predicted."

There chanced at the time that one Raminagrobis, a poet, well stricken in years, lay a-dying. To him Panurge, accompanied by Epistemon and Friar John, repaired in haste. The poet, like the other oracles, gave forth a doubtful response in the words of a *rondeau équivoque*, which Rabelais appropriates from the poems of Guillaume Cretin. The good old bard, who is thinking of anything rather than of marriage, dismisses his visitors with words of solemn caution against priests and monks. Rabelais is serious again in the presence of Death the Conqueror :—

"Go, my sons, under the care of the Great God of the Heavens, and let me be troubled no more with this affair, nor with any other. I have this day, being the last of May and of myself, turned out of my house with great fatigue and difficulty a heap of villanous, unclean, and pestilent beasts, black, variegated, dun, white, ash-coloured and spotted, who would not let me die at my ease, but called me away from the sweet meditation in which I was reposing, contemplating,

seeing, and already touching and tasting the happiness and felicity which the good God has prepared for His faithful and elect in the other life and state of immortality. Turn aside from their path; be not like unto them."

Never was writer more full of incongruities. We have this speech of the dying poet in which the author, not for the first time, pours out his ill-restrained hatred of priests and monks, between two pages of the wildest extravagance. Panurge, partly perhaps because the words of the poet were too plain and easy to be read, manifests the most lively indignation at such an attack on the props and pillars of the Church. He is always, however, orthodox, as becomes so great a sinner. Epistemon, for his part, smooths and explains away the speech. The poet, he says, was very far indeed from meaning to attack the mendicant friars and monks. He was simply execrating flies, wasps, fleas, and other vermin. But Panurge knows better. He gets, however, small comfort or encouragement from the *rimes équivoques* of poor old Raminagrobis, and turns in despair at the failure of so many oracles to his friend Epistemon, who enumerates with great show of learning the oracles frequented by the ancients, and laments that they have all grown dumb.

"But," says Panurge, "in the Ogygian islands Saturn, bound with fair chains of gold, dwells within a rock of gold, nourished with divine ambrosia and nectar brought daily from the heavens by birds—presumably the same ravens"—Panurge is not strong in early Christian history—"which sustained St Paul, the first hermit, in the wilderness. He foretells to every one what his lot will be. Let us go to him." But Epistemon is of opinion that the thing is a manifest fable, and suggests

that Herr Trippa, the greatest living professor of astrology, geomancy, chiromancy, and other like sciences, is in the neighbourhood, and might be consulted.

There can be little doubt that Rabelais in Herr Trippa has Cornelius Agrippa von Netterheim in his mind. Not that Herr Trippa is absolutely identical with Cornelius. As well think that the physician of the fiction, Rondibilis, later on, is identical with the real physician Rondelet; but the name suggests a comparison which, in a few points, will be found to hold good. Cornelius Agrippa, Professor of Hebrew, theology, philosophy, medicine, astrology, magic, and many other things, the author of the work on the 'Vanity of Human Science,' the friend of Luther and Melancthon, who yet was never a professed Protestant, might fairly be compared, point for point, with Rabelais. He was more learned, but there were subjects in which Rabelais was greater than he. Agrippa understood astrology—which included a great deal more than the calculations of nativities—but Rabelais was a better anatomist. He was a reader of natural science, but Rabelais was a better botanist. He was a Hebraist, but Rabelais had read more Greek. Like Rabelais, he led a wandering life; like him, he was dependent on patrons' wealth. Rabelais and Agrippa failed to secure adequate support, and died in comparative poverty. They were born within three years of each other, but Agrippa died in 1535, eleven years before this book was published. The dates of Agrippa's employments — he entered the service of Margaret of Austria in 1528, while Rabelais was still an unknown student at Ligugé—prevent us from supposing the two men to have been friends, acquaintances, or rivals; but he occupied during his life a much

greater place in men's thoughts than Rabelais as yet had gained, though he has now become a mere name and shadow of a name. His character has been summed up in the words, "*Contemnit, scit, nescit, deflet, ridet, irascitur, insectatur, carpit omnia, ipse philosophus, dæmon, heros, deus et omnia.*"

Panurge then pays a visit to Herr Trippa. The philosopher's first conclusion, from an examination of the face and hand, was portentously unfavourable to married happiness. This conclusion was confirmed by an appeal to the planets; whereupon, Panurge taking this kind of prophecy with an ill grace, not to say with temper, Herr Trippa proceeded to offer him any other kind of divinations he might prefer. This is another opportunity for Rabelais to show his learning. He knows all the superstitions of all ages, and proceeds to enumerate them with the contempt of a physicist, and the joy of a scholar who has found out such an opportunity of displaying his knowledge. Among them are pyromancy, or divination by fire; aeromancy, by air; hydromancy, by water; lecanomancy, by inspection of a dish; catoptromancy, by looking into a mirror; coscinomancy, by a sieve—"with a sieve and a pair of scissors you shall see devils;" alphitomancy, by barley; aleuromancy, by flour; astragalomancy, by knuckle-bones; tiromancy, by cheese; giromancy, by circles; sternomancy, by the breast; libanomancy, by frankincense; gastromancy, or ventriloquism; cephalomancy, by roasting the head of an ass on burning coal; ceromancy, by the dropping of wax into water; capnomancy, by smoke; axinomancy, by the throwing of the axe; onymancy, by the finger-nail—"but you must have oil and wine;" tephramancy,

by ashes; botanomancy, by plants—"I have here some sage-leaves which will do for us"—sicomancy, by fig-leaves; ichthyomancy, by fish; choiromancy, by pigs; cleromancy, by the bean; anthropomancy, by inspection of human entrails; sibylline stichomancy, by the verses of sibyls; onomatomancy, by the letters of the name; alectryomancy, by the cock.

"I shall draw a circle here, and shall divide it in your sight into four-and-twenty equal portions. Upon each one I shall draw a letter of the alphabet; in each letter I shall place a grain of barley; then I shall let go a young cock across the circle. You will see, believe me, that he will eat up the grains upon the letters so as to declare the future in the married state as prophetically as happened under the Emperor Valens when he was in perplexity to know the name of his successor, for the foreseeing and alectryomantic cock spelt out for him the letters Θ.Ε.Ο.Δ. Would you like to know the future by the art of *aruspicium*, or that of *extispicium*—by augury, by the flight of birds, by the song of divining birds, by the movements of the sacred ducks? Would you like to learn from necromancy? I will raise you up suddenly any dead man you like, just as Apollonius of Tyana raised Achilles, and the Pythoness did in the presence of Saul: the dead man shall reveal to us the whole, neither more nor less than, at the invocation of Erictho, a dead man revealed to Pompey all the progress and issue of the battle of Pharsalia. Or, if you are afraid of the dead, as is common to all who are unfortunate in marriage, I will simply use sciomancy, or divination by means of a shade."

Here Panurge boils over. This parade of learning, with the constant assumption that his marriage will be unlucky, is too much for him, and he curses the magician.

The advice of Friar John, who is next consulted, may be passed over. One thing may be remarked, that the

worthy monk has lost nothing by being transported from the court of Gargantua to the following of the heir-apparent. He is as lusty an animal, as full of spirits and vigour, as outspoken, and as straightforward as when he seized the cross made out of an apple-tree and slew King Picrochole's men in that surprising manner, all to defend the next year's vintage.

The appeal to oracles, sibyls, dying poets, and astrologers having so far signally failed, Pantagruel, whose patience in this knotty matter is beyond all praise, remarks that as everything in the world consists of soul, body, and worldly goods, and as the guard of these three we have appointed the divine, the physician, and the lawyer—nothing could be better than to take the advice, in turn, of three distinguished members of these professions. It is about this point that we begin to suspect Panurge's curiosity of marriage to be developing itself unconsciously, in the mind of the author, into a philosophical curiosity to discover a solution to a far broader question, or rather group of questions. This is quite in the manner of Rabelais.[1] Can man foretell the future by aid of nature? Are there in this world laws constant and absolute which men can learn, and having learned them, can predict what will happen? Is what we call chance the working of some hidden force? Can we compel this unknown force to yield up its secrets? Can we get any help, or information, or comfort from the unseen world? Panurge tries first, for his petty personal affairs, the old methods, the *sortes Virgilianæ*, the interpretations of dreams, the sibyl's leaves, the words of a dying man, the astrologer, with his countless plans of super-

[1] See Fleury's Rabelais, ii. 69 *et seq.*

stitious divination. Alas! there is no response; the oracles are dumb: what we do get is uncertain, rambling, and of manifold interpretation. From the wisdom of the ancients he turns, by Pantagruel's directions, to the wisdom of the moderns, and consults the theologian, the physician, and the lawyer.

"Therefore," said Pantagruel, "on the next ensuing Sunday let us have for our divine the godly father Hippothadeus, for physician our honest Master Rondibilis, and for legist our friend Bridlegoose. Nor will it be amiss if we enter upon the Pythagorean tetrade, and for a fourth that we have our faithful philosopher Trouillogan, seeing that only the perfect philosopher, and such a philosopher as is Trouillogan, is able to answer positively on all doubts which may be proposed to him. Carpalim, give orders that we may have all four to dinner on Sunday next."

The theologian is first invited to give an opinion. The future, however, which he holds forth is clogged with the conditional *if*. He will be happy in his marriage if he marry a good and honourable wife, if he comport himself as a good husband should, and if both husband and wife stand perpetually in awe of the divine commandments.[1] Panurge takes no comfort from this modified assurance of happiness, and turns to the doctor, Rondibilis.

The learned physician, in whose name and grave discourse we may permit ourselves to recognise one Guillaume Rondelet, an eminent physician of Montpellier, advises Panurge to divert his thoughts from the contemplation of marriage by the five methods recommended in ancient

[1] Those who love literary parallels may compare Desperiers on the efficacy of prayer in the 'Cymbalum Mundi.'

authors. Foremost among them he places deep and continuous study. Here, again, Rabelais allows his imagination free and worthy play, and pronounces a panegyric on study which seems almost inspired.

"Contemplate the form of a man intent upon some study. You will see that all his natural faculties are suspended, all exterior sensation has ceased; you will think him no longer living in himself, but rapt away in ecstasy; you will own that Socrates was in no way wrong when he said that philosophy is nothing else than a meditation on death. Perhaps that is the reason why Democritus blinded himself, esteeming the loss of sight less than the diminution of his contemplations, which he felt to be interrupted by the wandering of his eyes. Therefore is Pallas, goddess of wisdom, guardian of students, called a virgin; therefore are the Muses virgins; therefore remain the Graces in eternal maidenhood; and I remember to have read how Cupid, being asked by his mother why he did not assail the Muses, replied that he found them so pure, so modest, and so continually occupied, that he unbent his bow, closed his quiver, and extinguished his flambeau, through shame and fear of hurting them. Then he took off the bandage from his eyes the better to see them, and to hear their pleasant chants and poetic odes. In this he took the greatest pleasure possible, so that often he found himself ravished by their beauty and their graces, and was lulled to sleep by their harmonies. So far was he from wishing to assail them or to distract them from their studies."

Besides a second discourse, garnished in the Rabelaisian style with classical illustrations, reminiscences, and anecdotes, Panurge is nothing forwarded by the doctor. There remains the philosopher Trouillogan; and here the author suddenly remembering Gargantua, and neglecting the fact that he had already long since been consigned to

Fairyland, makes him unexpectedly enter the hall, followed by Ponocrates. He is no more a giant, but a wise and accomplished sovereign, who drinks gravely to the health of the company, and listens to the discussion. The philosopher evades every question, and will return a direct answer to no single point. He pleases Gargantua, however, who leaves the company with many compliments.

Judge Bridlegoose, who should have been consulted next, is unavoidably absent, having to attend a higher court than his own in order to give reasons for a certain judgment. Six chapters are devoted to this famous case. The judge, now an old man, has decided in his official capacity upwards of four thousand cases, his decisions having, for the most part, been accepted as just and proper. It is therefore a very hard thing for him to be summoned in his old age to defend and explain his judgment.

"For all excuse, he replied nothing more than that he was become old, and his sight was not so good as it had been; alleging the various miseries and calamities which age brings with it. Therefore it was that he did not see the number of the dice so clearly as in the past time. Whence it might be that just as Isaac, being old and seeing imperfectly, took Jacob for Esau, so he, in the decision of the case in question, might have taken a four for a five, especially as at this time he made use of his small dice."

In point of fact the good old judge has never used any other method in his decisions than to throw the dice, a plan which, in all simplicity, he believes to be that followed by all his brethren. Chance has always ruled his verdict. Yet he reads, examines, notes, and makes

abstracts of the whole mass of the pleadings and documents handed in with every case. "But why," asks the president, "do you not at once throw your dice, and have done with it?" "Because it is well," replies the judge, "to proceed according to form in all judicial matters; because, also, the labour of reading the documents is good for health; and because, at its first appearance in court, a new case is generally an unformed, crude thing, which requires time, the pleadings of many lawyers, and the accumulations of much documentary evidence, before it assumes its true proportions." The judge shows cause for his method by a copious mass of legal and classical illustration. His learning, his memory, and his knowledge of procedure set off the simple complacency with which he explains his plan. Every kind of case he shows may be so decided. For important causes big dice should be employed; for minor ones, smaller; because "semper in obscuris quod minimum est sequimur." You must throw first for the defendant and then for the plaintiff. In criminal cases, even when the prisoner has been taken red-handed, the method is applicable, after the prosecutor has taken a good long sleep, and brought evidence of that fact. Pantagruel begs that the judge may be acquitted in consideration of forty years' good service, during which time he has delivered many excellent judgments and attained so high a reputation for impartiality—"that envy itself could not be so impudent as to accuse him of any act worthy of reprehension."

The wisdom of the moderns, as well as that of the ancients, has failed. Suppose we try a fool, the great fool Triboulet.

"Panurge on his arrival gave him a pig's bladder, well filled and resounding by reason of peas which were within. Then he gave him a gilt wooden sword; then a little pouch made of a tortoise-shell; then a bottle with wicker-work filled with Breton wine, and a quarter of a hundred of apples.

"Triboulet girded on the sword and the pouch, took the bladder in his hand, ate some of the apples, and drank up all the wine. Panurge looked at him curiously and said, 'I have never yet seen any fool who would not drink willingly and in long gulps.' Then he set forth his affair in rhetorical and elegant phrases. Before he had finished, Triboulet gave him a great blow with his fist between his shoulders, handed him back the bottle and flirted him on the nose with the bladder, saying for his only answer while he shook his head, 'By the Lord, Lord, a mad fool, ware monk, bagpipe of Buzançay!'"

This remarkable oracle sets them all thinking. Pantagruel, most learned of princes, shows by illustration from ancient history how the shaking of the head is a frequent if not a universal concomitant of oracular utterance. Heliogabalus, wishing to be thought inspired, went shaking his head: the Mænads, priestesses of Bacchus, the priests of Cybele, Roman women at the Bacchanalian festivals, all shook their heads: and Plautus held Charmides was in a rapt ecstasy because he shook his head. Therefore the utterances of Triboulet must be taken seriously. For his own part, he interprets them as a discouragement of marriage. Panurge differs from this reading. It is to be observed that in the whole of his search after oracular direction, Panurge always interprets the obscure words into an encouragement to marry.

"Let me not," he says, "imprudently desire to be exempt from the dominion of folly. Everybody is a fool. Solomon says, that infinite is the number of fools. Out of infinity nothing can be deducted ; to infinity nothing can be added. Aristotle proves that. A fool, and a mad fool, I should be, if, being a fool, I should not esteem myself a fool. And the rest of Triboulet's words make in my favour. He says to my wife, 'Ware monk (*moyne*).' He means the sparrow (*moineau*) that will be her pet, like that of Lesbia. Then he means that she will be rustic and agreeable, as a fair bagpipe-player of Buzançay. The truthful Triboulet knows my natural and internal affections ; for I declare that I love the gay and dishevelled shepherdesses far more than the great ladies of the court, with their perfumes and rich attire. The sound of the rustic pipes pleases me more than the droning of lutes, rebecs, and courtly violins. He gave me a blow with his fist on my shoulders. Very well, let it be for the love of the Lord and deduction from the pains of purgatory. He did not do it out of malice ; he thought he was beating some page ; he is benevolent in his folly. I pardon him with all my heart. He flirted me on the nose. That means that there will be little plays between my wife and me, as happens among all new-married folks."

One course remains : to try the oracle of the Divine Bottle—la Dive Bouteille. It can be reached by a long and perilous voyage in unknown seas and among islands little visited. The dangers of the expedition make it the more attractive to Pantagruel. That great traveller, Xenomanes, will act as their guide and interpreter. Epistemon, Carpalim, Eusthenes (Knowledge, Dexterity, Strength) will accompany the party. An immense fleet is gathered at St Malo, although at the beginning of the work we were supposed to be in Dipsodie, far beyond the Cape of Good Hope. The ships are laden with every kind of

provision. Then comes a long digression, in which, under a description of the herb Pantagruelion or hemp, Rabelais exhausts himself, if that were possible, in eulogy of industry, commerce, and human ingenuity applied to peaceful purposes. To be provided with goodly store of this kind is to be fortified with determination and courage. It is a roundabout method of praising the qualities which most advance the world, but it is the author's method. And when he describes the herb and its properties, he speaks as a botanist as well as a moralist.

All being ready at last—Ho for the Dive Bouteille!

CHAPTER VI.

THE QUEST OF THE DIVINE BOTTLE.

We are now to set forth upon the strangest voyage on which ever company of adventurers were engaged. We are to sail over unknown seas, and to land on unknown islands. We shall encounter strange perils, and fall among strange people. We shall light upon wondrous customs: we shall meet with perilous adventures. Everywhere we shall find the people exactly the same as in France, following the same customs, speaking the same tongue, wearing the same attire, occupied with the same superstitions, and beset with the same prejudices: everywhere there will be illustrations as well as contrasts of the life we have left behind us: everywhere we shall find the same pretence at a reply, and the same dead silence to the question which lies in Pantagruel's mind, and is obscurely figured in Panurge's doubt. Is there, anywhere, or has there ever been any voice, any echo, any reply from the silent world?

We sail in quest of truth. What we discover we shall learn later on.

Meanwhile we are not going to tell the world what we are in search of. Sufficient for them to know that

Panurge still wears his long cloak of russet brown, with the spectacles in his cap, and the flea in his ear, in token, first, of his desire to marry and lead a peaceful life—and secondly, of his grave doubts as to the prudence of the step; and that we are bound for the Oracle of the Bottle, where his doubts may be resolved.

Many strange voyages were made in the old days when the *mappa mundi* was still open to the imagination of geographers; when the coast of America was supposed to be the coast of India; when the Ogygian Islands lay four days' sail from Albion, and the Fortunate Islands were somewhere in mid-Atlantic. The most famous of the voyages, and that to which the narrative of Rabelais owes most, is the 'True History' of Lucian. There was also the voyage of St Brandan, who landed on the frontiers of hell, passed Judas floating on a red-hot rock, and visited the island where Adam and Eve, yet sinless, once dwelt. There were the Argonauts of the *pseudo* Orpheus, of Apollonius Rhodius, and of Valerius Flaccus, from the first of which Rabelais borrows the island of the Long-lived, to which we shall presently come. There was, in those days of early discovery, nothing too marvellous to be believed, nothing impossible to be found on this great globe. And just as in his First Book Rabelais burlesques with flashes of serious purpose the romantic times of chivalrous adventure, so now with keener insight and firmer hand, with a more definite aim, he burlesques the stories of travel and discovery. Meantime, beneath each new extravagance lies hidden some parable which those may read who have the eyes. Unhappily we must not linger as we voyage in this marvellous archipelago.

It is a goodly company which starts upon this voyage. There is Panurge, attired according to his vow, half afraid, but anticipating scenes of mirth and mischief. There is Friar John, burly and confident, mindful of his former prowess. There are Epistemon, Eusthenes, Carpalim, Rhizotomus, Gymnast, and Xenomanes the traveller: there is, at the head of all, the wise and grave Prince Pantagruel.

There were twelve ships composing the fleet, but these were supplemented by a like number of triremes—Rabelais cannot lose a single opportunity of airing his learning—row-barges, galleys, and feluccas, all stored with plenty of the herb Pantagruelion. The admiral's ship, so to speak, was the Thalamege, which carried for ensign, hoisted in her stern, a bottle half silver half gold. The other ships bore drinking-vessels, funnels, goblets, and so forth, for their ensigns, so that "there was not a man, however sad, melancholy, and in the dumps, even if he were Heraclitus the weeper, but seeing this noble convoy of ships and their devices, must have been seized with new joy, and confessed that the travellers were all honest topers."

Before setting sail, the officers gathered on board the Thalamege, where Pantagruel made them a short exhortation, and said prayers, after which they sang a psalm—"When Israel went out of Egypt"—it was one of the psalms translated by Marot, and it was then the fashion of the Court at Paris to sing them, a fashion which lasted a very little while. Then they held a feast, at which, of course, plenty of wine was consumed. And this was the cause that no one became sea-sick, a thing which could not otherwise have happened, although every-

body had been "eating quinces, citron-peel, juice of pomegranates, sweet or sour, or keeping long diet, or plastering their stomachs with paper, or otherwise doing what foolish physicians prescribe to those who go to sea."

They started due west in the latitude of Olonne. For the first two days they discover nothing, but on the third they make an island called Nowhere (Medamothy = Μηδαμόθι), whose king is Philophanes, absent for the marriage of his brother Philotheamon. This is the land of show and ostentation. It was the day of the great fair, and Pantagruel's company bought pictures and strange animals. Here Pantagruel receives a letter from his father, and sends him back word by pigeon-express that all is going well with the expedition. On the fifth day, having again set sail, they discover a merchantman to windward, and on bearing up and hailing her, find the ship to be full of passengers from Lantern Land, whither they are going; and they are told that there is to be a general chapter of the Lanterns about the latter end of July—it was then the fourteenth of June—which they might witness if they got to Lantern Land in time. As we hear nothing more about this chapter of Lanterns, probably Rabelais forgot all about it. He writes carelessly, as we have had many opportunities of observing, promises recklessly, and thinks nothing of forgetting a promise, or leaving a thing half told. The chapter of Lanterns refers perhaps to the Council of Trent, perhaps to some council of Protestants at Geneva or La Rochelle.

It would appear, though it is not so stated, that Panurge, Epistemon, and Friar John went on board the ship, because it was on this occasion that occurred the

famous adventure of the sheep. The story is borrowed from Folengo, an Italian author, contemporary with Rabelais,—like him an ex-monk, and like him a writer of burlesque stories. The 'Histoire Maccaronique de Merlin Coccaye,' a French translation of Folengo's 'Macaronics,' in which this tale is told, has been published in the 'Bibliothèque Elzévirienne.'

It began with a quarrel between one Dindenault, a sheep-merchant of Taillebourg, and Panurge. The latter, readier with his tongue, exasperates the drover, who would have killed him, but his sword providentially stuck in the scabbard. Panurge, always an unblushing coward, runs away bawling for help. The quarrel is made up, but Panurge nourishes a dream of revenge, which he presently puts into execution. He pretends that he wishes to buy one of the drover's rams: after bargaining, which is sufficiently comic, but too long, he succeeds in agreeing upon the price, and buys the ram:—

"On a sudden,—I do not know how—the thing was unexpected, and I had not time to consider it,—Panurge, without saying another word, throws his ram, crying and bleating, into the sea. All the other sheep crying and bleating with like intonation, began to throw themselves and to leap into the sea after him in file. The rush was who would first leap after his companion. Nor was it possible to keep them, for you know that the nature of the sheep is always to follow the leader wherever he goes, wherefore Aristotle (lib. ix. de Histor. Anim.) calls him the most foolish animal in the world. The merchant, in consternation at seeing his sheep perish and drown before his eyes, tried with all his might to stop and prevent them. But all in vain. All, one after the other, leapt into the sea and were drowned. Lastly, he seized a strong and large ram by the fleece on the deck of

the ship, thinking to hold him back and so to save the rest; but the sheep was so strong that he carried the merchant into the sea with him and he was drowned, just as the sheep of Polyphemus the one-eyed Cyclop carried out of the cavern Ulysses and his companions. In like manner acted all the other shepherds and drovers, taking some by the horns, others by the legs, and others by the fleece, but they were all in the same way carried into the sea and drowned miserably. Panurge, meanwhile, standing by the ship's kitchen, with an oar in his hand, not to help the drovers but to prevent them from climbing up into the ship, and escaping death, preached eloquently to them, reminding them in rhetorical phrases of the miseries of this world, the happiness of the next, affirming that happier are the dead than those who live in the vale of misery, and to each one promising a fair cenotaph and honorary sepulchre on the very top of Mont Cenis; wishing them, nevertheless, in case that to live still would not vex them, and drowning was not to their fancy, the happy chance of meeting with a whale, which, after the example of Jonah, should give them up safe and sound in some land of satin on the third day."

This story is a fair sample of fifteenth and sixteenth century humour. It is far better told, of course, than most of the stories which were so plentiful at the time. But the point, the joke of the thing, is typical. It turns on the death, or the wounding, or the suffering of the discomfited. Over and over again, in the facetious literature of the period, torture, mutilation, disgrace, and death mark the "place where the laughter comes in." Rabelais affords another example in the story which he presently tells of Villon's trick on Brother Tappecoue (see p. 134).

Continuing their course, the voyagers arrive presently at Ennasin, a triangular island whose inhabitants have

noses like the ace of clubs. They are all related to each other, but there are none of the ordinary terms of relationship among them, and they address each other with strange conceits. This is the country of those who follow after every affected habit.

After the island of Ennasin, they touch at the isle of Chely or Lips, which is the land of ceremonies, idle talk, and lip-service. The greatest courtesy is, of course, observed, by the king towards Pantagruel and his company.

If Lip island is the place where a meaningless politeness is everything, the next land they touch, that of Procuration, is the land of litigation and *chicane*. It is a country all blurred and blotted, so that one hardly knows what to make of it. On landing, the travellers were met by a number of "Procultous et Chicqanous," Pettifoggers and Catchpoles, who neither invited them to eat or drink, but with many scrapes and cringes put themselves at the strangers' service, for a consideration. The interpreter explains that they live by being beaten. "At Rome an infinite number of people gain their livelihood by poisoning, stabbing, and murdering; the Catchpoles earn theirs by being thrashed; so that if they are long without being beaten, they, with their wives and children, would be starved." One would have thought that here, at least, there was no occasion to parade the monks. But Rabelais thinks otherwise. The way is as follows:—

"When a monk, priest, usurer, or advocate intends to injure any gentleman of the country, he sends one of these Catchpoles to visit him. Catchpole cites him, serves a summons upon him, outrages him, and insults him impu-

dently, following his record and instruction; so that the gentleman, unless he is paralytic or more stupid than a tadpole, is constrained to bastinado him, to lay his sword about his head, or, still better, to throw him out of the window of his castle. That done, Catchpole is rich for four months, just as if beatings with a stick were his simple harvest. For he will have his pay from the usurer, monk, or priest, and from his assailant damages, sometimes so great and excessive that the gentleman may lose his whole estate by them, with the risk of rotting miserably in prison, just as if he had struck the king."

"I know," said Panurge, "an excellent remedy for this."

And then he tells the story how the Seigneur de Basché gave such a lesson to a Catchpole, that ever afterwards the office in his neighbourhood fell into disrespect. The story includes that of Villon's trick on Brother Tappecoue, already referred to.

"François Villon, in his old age, retired to St Maixent, in Poitou, under the protection of a good man, *abbé* of the said place. There, in order to amuse the people, he undertook to play the Passion in the action and language of the country. The parts distributed, the players rehearsed, the stage prepared, he told the mayor and sheriffs that the mystery would be ready for the fair at Niort; only they had to find dresses fit for the personages represented. The mayor and sheriffs gave orders to meet the case. Villon, in order to dress an old peasant who was going to play God the Father, asked Friar Stephen Tappecoue, sacristan to the Cordelier monks of the place, to lend him a cope and stole. Tappecoue refused, alleging that, by the provincial statutes, it was rigorously forbidden to lend or give anything to play-actors. Villon replied that the statute only concerned farces, mummeries, and dissolute games, and that he had seen the thing done as he proposed at Brussels and elsewhere. Tappecoue,

notwithstanding, told him peremptorily that he must provide himself elsewhere if he pleased, but must hope for nothing from his sacristy. Villon reported this to the players as a great abomination, adding that God would shortly revenge himself, and make a signal example of Tappecoue.

"On the following Saturday he had notice that Tappecoue, on the mare belonging to the convent, was gone to make a collection at St Ligaire, and that he would be coming back about two o'clock in the afternoon. At that time, therefore, he made the exhibition of his devilry through the streets and markets. The devils were all caparisoned in skins of wolves, calves, and sheep, rigged with sheep's heads, bulls' horns, and great kitchen-hooks, girt round with broad leathern belts, from which there hung big cows' bells and mules' bells, with a horrific din. Some held in their hands black sticks filled with fusees; others long lighted firebrands, on which, at the street corners, they threw resin-powder, from which came terrible flame and smoke. After having led them thus, with contentment of the people and dreadful fright of children, he finally took them to banquet at a tavern outside the gate on the road to St Ligaire.

"Arrived at the tavern, he perceived afar off Tappecoue, as he was coming back from making his collection, and cried to his devils,—

'Hic est de patriâ, natus de gente belistrâ,
Qui solet antiquo bribas portare bisacco.'

"'Par la mort Dieu,' cried the devils; 'he would not lend a single cope to God the Father. Let us frighten him.'

"'It is well said,' replied Villon; 'but hide every man until he passes, and charge your fusees and firebrands.'

"Tappecoue arrived at the place. All started out into the road before him, throwing fire from all sides over him and on his mare, beating their drums, and roaring like devils, 'Hho! hho! hho! brourrrs, rrrourrrs, rrrourrrs! hou, hou! hho! hho! hho! Friar Stephen, what do you think of us for devils?'

"The mare in a fright began to trot, to run, to gallop, to

back-jump, and to jerk, insomuch that she threw Friar Tappecoue, though he held fast by the saddle with all his might. . . . So was he dragged by the mare, continually multiplying her kicks, and jumping over hedges, bushes, and ditches in terror, in such wise that she smashed all his head, so that his brain fell out near the cross Hosanna. Then the arms fell in pieces, one here, one there ; the legs in like manner ; then . . . she arrived at the convent, bringing nothing home with her but his right foot and a twisted shoe.

"Villon, seeing that what he had hoped for had happened, said to his devils, 'You will play well, messieurs les diables —you will play well, I assure you. Oh, how well you will play! I defy the devilry of Saumur, of Doué, of Montmorillon, of Langes, of St Epain, of Angers,—even, by the Lord! of Poitiers, in case they should be compared with you. Oh, how well you will play!'"

This pleasing incident in the life of Villon is not only remarkable for the feeling and kindly nature of joke customary at the time, but is also a very good specimen of the Rabelaisian story. There are fifty such in the book, of which most do not permit themselves to be reproduced. It is impossible to say how much truth there is in the story. Villon in the fifteenth century resembles Rabelais in the sixteenth in one respect, and one only. Round his name, as round that of Rabelais, there gathered an infinite number of stories.

Friar John, in order to observe for himself the marvellous customs of Procuration, went ashore armed with a bag of money, and, meeting a shoal of Catchpoles, asked who would be soundly beaten for twenty ducats? They all volunteer with one consent.

"Friar John singled out one, a red-nosed Catchpole who wore a great silver ring on his right thumb. When he had chosen him, I perceived that they all murmured; and I

heard a tall, young, thin Catchpole, a good and clever clerk, and according to public report a worthy fellow in the ecclesiastical courts, making complaint and murmuring because the same Red-nose carried away all the practice, so that if there were but some poor thirty bastinadoes to be got, he would certainly pocket eight-and-twenty and a half of them. But all these complaints and murmurings proceeded from mere envy. Friar John so unmercifully belaboured Red-nose, front and back, sides, legs, and arms, head and all, with a mighty cudgelling, that I thought he was beaten to death. Then he gave him the twenty crowns. Up jumped the rascal, as jolly as a king or two. The rest cried out to Friar John, 'Sir, Friar devil, if it pleases you to beat some of us cheaper, we are all at your command. We are all at your service—bags, papers, pens, and all.' Whereupon Red-nose cried out against them with a loud voice—'Fête Dieu! You will come into my market! You will take away and seduce my clients! I summon you all.' Then he turned with smiling and joyous face to Friar John. 'Reverend father in the devil,—Sir, if you have found me good stuff, and it please you to take your pleasure in beating me again, I will content myself with half the just price. Don't spare me, please.'"

After the island of Procuration, they arrive at those of Tohu and Bohu—Ruin and Desolation. This had lately been devastated by the giant Bringuenarilles, who habitually lived on windmills, and who had devoured everything, including the frying-pans, kettles, and pots. In other words, the country had been pillaged and ruined in the course of war.

Let us pause for a moment to remark that here occurs a marked and great change, not only in the character of the places visited, but also in the spirit of the narrative. There is at last an end of the unforced and natural gaiety with which, up to this point, the story bubbles

over. Henceforth the merriment is artificial, and the satire keen and bitter. We laughed over the island of Foolish Conceits, over that of Ostentation, of Lip-service, and of Procuration. We learned nothing there to help us in our quest. But we were only at the beginning of our voyage; we expected no help from the follies and affectations of men: now, however, we advance a step farther, and after passing through a mighty storm, find ourselves among those who pretend to read for men a message from the unseen world. And we shall sail among these people until the oracle itself is reached. This transition takes place in the middle of the Fourth Book. It will be remembered (see p. 45) that the earlier chapters of this Book were published by themselves first, as a tentative step: they are the inoffensive chapters. Before the whole could be published, the writer took the precaution, as we have seen, of stripping himself of his Church preferments. And because these chapters, with the last Book—the posthumous Book—carry on the story without a break, I have for the purposes of this work considered all together as one Book, and called it the "Quest of the Divine Bottle."

After leaving certain islands which are only named and not visited, they espy nine sail which came spooning before the wind: they were full of monks,—Jacobins, Jesuits, Capuchins, Hermits, Austins, Bernardins, Egnatins, Celestins, Théatins, Amadeans, Cordeliers, Carmelites, Minims, and other religious saints bound for the Council of Chesil (which is, in Hebrew, the star which announces storm), there to sift and quibble new articles of faith against the heretics. Panurge is delighted, in his orthodox way, at the sight of so many blessed

fathers, and presently sends them a present of hams, sausages, and other things which promote thirst and lead to the drinking of wine. But Pantagruel becomes melancholy, as foreseeing the terrible storm which is about to fall upon them. I do not understand whether Rabelais intends the storm to follow naturally on the mere passage of a shipload of monks, or whether the lands to which the ships are now steering are surrounded by a belt of storm and tempest. Later on, we are told that when one of the Macreons (to whose isle they are steering) dies, the air is full of storms. The incident of the storm, like the story of Dindenault and the sheep, is borrowed from Folengo. As regards the description, it makes up in energy what it lacks in reality. In other words, Rabelais had never seen a storm at sea.

"Pantagruel having first implored the aid of the Great God his Preserver, and made public prayer in fervent devotion, by the advice of the pilot held firmly to the mast. Friar John was stripped to the shirt to help the sailors; so also were Epistemon, Ponocrates, and the rest. Panurge alone sat on the deck weeping and lamenting. Friar John, seeing him, cried out, 'By the Lord! Panurge the calf; Panurge the blubberer; Panurge the coward. You would do much better to help us here than to sit there crying like a cow!' 'Be, be, be, bous, bous, bous!' replied Panurge. 'Friar John, my friend, my good father, I drown—my friend, I drown. It is all over with me, my spiritual father, my friend—it is all over. The water has got into my shoes by way of my collar. Bous, bous, bous, paisch, hu, hu, hu! I drown, Bebe bous, bous, bobous bobous, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho! Zalas! Zalas! now I am like a forked tree, with my heels up and my head down. Would to God that I were now in the ark of those blessed fathers whom we met this morning, so devout, so fat, so joyous, and so full of grace. Holos, holos,

holos, zalas, zalas! this wave of all the devils (*mea culpa Deus*) —I mean this wave of the Lord, will overwhelm our ship. Zalas! Friar John, confession. Here I am on my knees. *Confiteor*, your sacred benediction.' 'Thousand devils!' cried Friar John. 'Do not let us swear,' said Panurge. 'To-morrow as much as you please.'"

But they presently, and after several chapters, pass through the storm, and Panurge pulls himself together :—

"'All goes well,' he cries. 'Vogue la galère!—only Friar John does nothing. His name is Friar John Do-nothing, and he looks on while I am toiling and working for this good man, the sailor, first of his name. As for me, I have no fear. I am called William the Fearless. So much courage have I, and more. I do not mean sheep's courage. I mean wolf's courage, murderer's assurance. I fear nothing but danger.'"

The land at which they arrive is one of the islands of the Macreons, or the Long-lived. There are many islands in this archipelago, but only one inhabited. The rest are overrun with wood and desert. Macrobius, the oldest of their chief men, entertains Pantagruel and his crew hospitably, and takes those who wish it to see the curiosities of the island. These consist of ancient temples, obelisks, pyramids, monuments, tombs with inscriptions in known and unknown characters.

The good Macrobius thus explains the mystery of the forest :—

"Pilgrim friends, this island is one of the Sporades of the ocean. In former times rich, frequented, wealthy, populous, and full of traffic; but now, by course of time and on the decline of the world, poor and desolate, as you see. In this dark forest before you, above seventy-eight thousand paranangs long and broad, is the dwelling-place of the demons

and heroes who are grown old. We believe that one of them died yesterday, for the comet which we saw for three or four days before shines no longer, and at his death arose this terrible storm; for while they are alive, all happiness attends both this and the adjacent islands, and at sea is a settled calm and serenity. At the death of any one of them we commonly hear in the forest loud and mournful lamentations. We see on land pestilence, disasters, and calamities; in the air storms and darkness, and at sea tempest and hurricanes."

Pantagruel remarks that the heavens, joyful as it were for the approaching reception of those blessed souls, make bonfires with comets and blazing meteors, which, at the same time, serve as a prognostication to us that in a few days one of those venerable souls is to leave her body and this terrestrial globe.

"I am willing to believe what Macrobius has told us of the comet seen in the air for certain days before the death [of the demigod]. For such souls are so noble, so precious, so heroic, that the heavens give a signification of their death beforehand. And just as the prudent physician, seeing by certain signs his patient enter upon the way of death, warns the wife, children, relatives, and friends some days before the impending death, so that in the short time which remains they may admonish him to set order in his household, to exhort and bless his children, to recommend the state of widowhood to his wife, to declare what will be necessary for the maintenance of his wards, and so be not surprised by death without taking due thought for his soul and for his house: in like manner the benevolent heavens, as if joyous at the reception of these blessed souls, seem to hold forth fires of joy by means of comets and meteors, which they wish to be for men a sure and certain prognostic and prediction, that within a few days these venerable souls will leave their bodies and the earth. . . . Thus, by such comets, the

silent heavens say, 'Mortal men, if you wish to know anything from these happy souls, to learn anything touching the welfare of yourselves or of the state, make haste to ask them and to have their answer. For the end and catastrophe of the comedy approaches. This moment passed, you will regret them in vain.'

"'But,' asks Friar John, 'are these heroes and demigods mortal?'

"'Some think,' replies Pantagruel, 'that the life of a demigod reaches to 9720 years, but I am of opinion that all intellectual souls are exempted from the scissors of Atropos. They are all immortal, whether they be of angels, of demons, or human."

Then follows, with other grave and thoughtful matter, the weird story, taken from Plutarch, of the death of the great god Pan.

It must be owned that this island of Macreons is obscure. Who are these demigods, and what does Rabelais mean by their death and the storm which follows?

Most of the proposed interpretations of this riddle are too foolish to be considered for a moment. The following solution only half satisfies one. It is, however, thoughtful, and well worthy of Rabelais.[1]

The demigods, lingering among ruined temples and tombs, in a dark and obscure forest, surrounded by a simple folk who know nothing of the past, but yet regard their mysterious neighbours with awe and wonder, are the philosophers, historians, and poets of the ancient world. They lie there, neglected and forgotten. Their death is nothing but the passage from obscurity into the light of the Renaissance, and as each in turn emerges

[1] Fleury, vol. ii. p. 154.

into the upper air, he produces his own effect upon the world by upsetting old prejudices, introducing new ideas, and, in a sense, causing storms, revolutions, and disasters. "I would not," says Rabelais, speaking in the mouth of Pantagruel, "have missed the sufferings of the storm were I also to have missed the relation of those things." Rage of ignorant monks, persecution of orthodox doctors, misrepresentation, calumny,—all these may be cheerfully incurred by those who have the key—in Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew—to the brave teaching of the great men of old.

Leaving the land of the long-lived, they set sail, refreshed and newly victualled. Presently Xenomanes the traveller points out, quite visible on the horizon, the island of Tapinois ("Sly-land"), where reigns Prince Quaresme-prenant, the personification of Lent. But Xenomanes advises Pantagruel not to attempt a landing on the island on account of the cold reception and meagre fare he will receive there. And here Rabelais pours out the vials of his wrath on the enforced fasting of Lent. The season of Lent was to the *esprits forts* of the time exactly what the pinch of incense was to the early Christians—the outward and visible sign of conformity. It was also, for the orthodox, the chief weapon of persecution. They must fast—fast openly before men, and even privately, for fear of spies, or they must burn. It was one of the charges brought against Dolet, and figuring in the indictment along with the heavier accusation of blasphemy and atheism, that he had broken the laws of Lent. It was on a similar charge that Marot had to fly.

"Do not go ashore," said Xenomanes. "You will only

see a great devourer of grey peas; a great hay bottler; a mole-catcher, deceiver of folk blinded by ignorance; a standard-bearer of the ichthyophagists"—because Lent is the season for fish; "grinder of ashes"—because Lent begins on Ash Wednesday; "flogger of children"—because Lent is a sad and sour season; "father and foster-father of physicians"—because the imposition of this long fast is the cause of so many diseases, swarming with pardons and indulgences; "*a very honest man, a good Catholic, and of great devotion.*

He weeps, this cheerful Prince Quaresme-prenant, three-fourths of the day, and assists at no weddings. He lives on things that are salt and without nourishment; and as for his clothes, he wears "grey and cold, nothing before, nothing behind, and sleeves to match."

Xenomanes, after promising that they may possibly meet this devout Christian at the land of the Chitterlings —his sworn enemies—continues to describe his appearance, manners, and customs, in a long list which lasts for three chapters, so joyfully does Rabelais pour out his indignation at this superstition.

"His memory is like a scarf;
His common-sense is as the buzzing of bees;
His imagination like a peal of bells;
His understanding like a torn breviary;
His will like three nuts in a dish;
His judgment like a shoeing horn;
His thoughts like a flight of starlings;
His ideas like snails crawling out of strawberries;
His reason like a three-legged stool."

With six columns of mad similitudes, and then half a page of wild absurdity.

"What is yet more strange, he works, doing nothing, and does nothing though he works; he corybantises sleeping, and sleeps corybantising—that is, with his eyes open like the hares of Champagne, for fear of being surprised by the Chitterlings, his ancient enemies; he eats nothing fasting, and fasts eating nothing; he drinks in imagination, swims on the top of steeples, dries his clothes in ponds, fears his own shadow and the cries of fat kids, and plays with his own belt."

This description reminds Pantagruel of an apologue which he has read somewhere, and of which Rabelais leaves the application to the reader.

"Physis, which is Nature, had two daughters called Beauty and Harmony. Antiphysis, who is always in opposition to Nature, produced two daughters, named Abnormal and Discordant. Their heads were round like a ball, and not gently compressed on both sides in human shape. Their ears stood pricked up like the ears of an ass; their eyes sticking out of their heads, were placed upon bones like heels, without eyebrows, hard like crab's eyes; their feet were round like tennis-balls; their arms and hands turned behind towards the shoulders; and they walked on their head, turning continually round like a wheel, topsy-turvy, heels over head their feet in the air.

"Yet Antiphysis extolled her offspring, and strove to prove that their shape was handsomer and neater than that of the children of Physis, saying that thus to have spherical heads and feet, and to walk in a circular manner like a wheel, had something in it of the perfection of the divine power, which makes all things eternally turn in that fashion; and that to have our feet in the air and the head below was to imitate the Creator of the universe—the hair being like the roots and the legs the branches of man: for trees are better planted by their roots than they would be by their branches. . . . As for the arms and hands, she pretended to prove that they were more justly turned towards the shoulders, because that part of the body ought not

to be without defence while the forepart is duly fenced with teeth, which a man can use to defend himself against attack as well as to chew with. Thus she drew all fools and senseless persons into her opinion, and was admired by all brainless persons, and those bereft of common-sense."

The offspring of Antiphysis are all those who would impose laws of life contrary to those of nature, as is done especially by the priests and monks of the Church. The children of nature are the beauty and harmony of all her laws, in the discovery and obedience of which alone may be found the perfection of life.

The next land made is the Isle Farouche — Wild Island — inhabited by the deadly enemy of Prince Quaresme-prenant, the Chitterlings. Pantagruel would have attempted a reconciliation between the foes, but was dissuaded by Xenomanes, who pointed out the impossibility of ever bringing them to an understanding, so great is their mutual hatred. Four years before, it is true, there was some kind of truce, but since the Council of Chesil (Council of Trent) the old enmity has been revived with tenfold bitterness.

While they talk the Chitterlings are discerned half a league off, marching on them, in number forty-two thousand or thereabouts. Pantagruel calls a hasty council of war, and Epistemon thinks they may be coming out in force merely as a friendly welcome; but the Prince—he is never so far surprised or hurried as to neglect his classical illustrations — after reciting a few passages from history, in which he shows that the pretence of a friendly welcome has often been made the excuse for a treacherous attack, sends Gymnast and Carpalim to fetch soldiers from the ships. Panurge volunteers to go instead of

Gymnast. "By the frock that I wear," cries Friar John, "you want to get out of the fight, and will not come back. It is no great loss; he would do nothing here but blubber, lament, cry, and dishearten the brave soldiers." "I will certainly come back, my ghostly father," says Panurge, making off as fast as he could. "Only take care that the Chitterlings do not board the ships. While you fight I will pray God for your victory, after the example of the chivalrous captain Moses, leader of the people of Israel."

Pending the arrival of the soldiers, the excellent Prince Pantagruel discourses on the ancient practice of foretelling by names, with a digression on dreams. Then the army of Chitterlings arrive, and at once show that they have come with hostile intent. The victory is won by Friar John at the head of a band of valiant cooks, and all the Chitterlings would have been destroyed but for the arrival of a flying hog, at sight of whom the Chitterlings all fell upon their knees in adoration, for this was carnival. Peace was made with the queen of the island, which became tributary to the great Gargantua, and the expedition went on its way.

The madness of the Isle Farouche, and the Chitterling battle, are supplementary to the description of Sly-land and King Quaresme-prenant. Sly-land may be taken for the country of the fanatical Catholics, while Wild Island is that of the equally fanatical Protestants. Rabelais and his friends loved neither side. Next to these islands is placed that of Ruach or Wind, in which the people nourish and feed themselves wholly on wind: the poor by means of fans; the rich by windmills, beneath which, on days of banquet, they sit and regale

themselves, discussing the different varieties and qualities of breezes just as topers talk of wines.

An island whose inhabitants live by inhaling the wind? This opens out a wide field for interpretation. Those people who are carried away by false and foolish hopes, by fond enthusiasms, by promises which have and can have no foundation, the students of astrology and alchemy, the casuists and metaphysicians of the old school, the teachers of new religions,—any of these, and a thousand more, may stand for Rabelais's people of the land of Ruach. But considering that we are in a theological archipelago, we may perhaps assume that the people in this island—a quiet, reflective, and gentle race —represent that small school of religious and speculative men who gathered principally about the little Court of Marguerite — Lefèvre d'Étaples, Roussel, Briçonnet, and their friends—who thought to keep religion free from theology, and taught their flocks that a life of personal holiness was the only walk with God. For this school—gentle, amiable, and pure-minded as it was—the practical Rabelais had little sympathy but plenty of respect.

The next place is that of Papefigues—Pope-fig-land—which had once been rich and prosperous, but was now poor and miserable. The reason of the decay was that, shortly before, some of them, making an expedition to the neighbouring island of Papimanie, did, on the exhibition of the Pope's picture for the adoration of the people, make a gesture of contempt, crying, "A fig for it!" In revenge for this insult the people of Papimanie invaded Pope-fig-land and put to death all the men, sparing only the women and children. This leads up to a story of how a young and ignorant devil was cheated

by a rustic of that country. It may be read in La Fontaine's 'Tales.' While the narrative gives Rabelais another opportunity of deriding Catholic fanatics, we may again note that he shows no sympathy with the Protestants. That the islanders of Pope-fig-land are now poor, miserable, and persecuted, is a natural return for their stupidity in laughing at the Pope when they were not strong enough to fight his worshippers.

Pantagruel makes but a short stay in this desolate country, and proceeds to the blessed island of Papimanie. As soon as the anchor was dropped a boat put off from shore, in which were four persons—a monk, a falconer, a lawyer, and a vine-dresser, representing the Church, the landowners, the law, and agriculture, the four estates of mankind—and hails the ship.

"'Have you seen him, travellers? Have you seen him?'

"'Seen whom?' asks Pantagruel.

"'Him.'

"'Who is he, then?' cries Friar John. 'Par la mort bœuf, I will smash him'—thinking it was some robber, murderer, or church-breaker.

"'How then?' they cry. 'Is it possible that you do not know the Unique one? We mean—He that is.'

"'He that is,' returned Pantagruel, 'is God who in such words revealed Himself unto Moses. We never saw Him, nor can He be beheld by mortal eyes.'

"'We do not mean that Supreme God,' they reply, 'who rules in heaven. We speak of the God who lives on the earth.'

"'Surely they mean the Pope,' says Carpalim.

"'Yes, yes,' cries Panurge; 'oh yes, I have seen three of them—much better am I for the sight.'

"'O thrice and four times happy people!' they cry. 'You are welcome, and more than welcome.'"

They then learned that, in honour of their having seen the Pope, they were going to be received with great and special honour. In fact, the whole country came out to meet them in solemn procession, the four who had been in the boat crying out, "They have seen him! they have seen him! they have seen him!" and all the crowd kneeled before the strangers shouting, "O happy men! O most happy!" and that for a quarter of an hour; while the schoolmaster magisterially flogged the boys, so that they might remember the joyful occasion; and the Bishop of the island, Homenas by name, made haste to salute them with all episcopal splendour, his crosses, banners, standards, and holy-water pots.

The Bishop wanted to kiss their feet, but this Pantagruel would not allow. He then invited them to go to Church, after which they would feast. In the porch hangs a book above the reach of ordinary men, but Pantagruel—he is no longer a giant, but only, like Saul, a head and shoulders taller than his companions — can reach it. The book is gilt, covered with precious stones, and hung up in the porch by two massive chains of gold. It is the Book of the Decretals, a collection of all the Bulls addressed to the faithful since the origin of the Papacy, on which, especially on those which are forgeries, the Popes base their claim for temporal sovereignty, and the right of political dictation. Pantagruel protested, as he handled it, that the mere touch of the book made him long mightily to go forth and beat one or two sergeants, provided, he adds piously—because this kind of beating was ecclesiastically forbidden—they are not tonsured. Homenas informs them that, like the image of Cybele, that of Diana of Tauris, the ancile of

Numa Pompilius, and the oriflamme of France, this Book of Decretals came straight down from heaven, having been written by the hand of an angel. And because they have actually seen the Pope, the Bishop will allow them to see and kiss the Decretals on the inside, but after three days' fast.

"'Venerable man,' said Panurge, 'we have seen plenty of Decretals on paper, on parchment, and on vellum, written by hand, and printed from type. It is not at all necessary that you give yourself the trouble to show us this. We are contented with the goodwill, and we thank you for it.'

"'Nay,' replied Homenas, 'but you have not seen this one, written by the angels. Those of your country are only transcripts of ours, as we find written by one of our ancient Decretal scholiasts. For the rest, I entreat you not to consider my trouble. Only consider if you will confess and fast just three pretty little days.'

"'As for confessing,' said Panurge, 'we consent to that very willingly. Only the fasting does not suit us; for we have fasted so long on board that the spiders have spun webs across our teeth. See this excellent Friar John'—here Homenas courteously embraced him—'the moss is growing in his throat for want of moving and exercising his chops.'

"'It is true,' said Friar John, 'I have fasted so long that I am grown humpbacked.'

'Let us enter the church, then,' answered Homenas; 'midday is past, but I will say you a low and dry mass.'

"'I would rather,' said Panurge, 'have one washed down by some good Anjou wine. Push on, then.'

"The mass done, the Bishop drew a bundle of keys from a trunk near the high altar. With them he opened thirty-two key-holes, fourteen padlocks, and an iron window, strongly barred, above the high altar. Then with great mystery he covered himself with wet sackcloth, and drawing a curtain of crimson cloth showed us a portrait, painted badly enough according to my opinion. Then he touched it with

a long stick, and made all of us kiss the part of the stick which had touched the image.

"'What think you of this image?' asked the Bishop.

"'It is the likeness of a Pope,' said Pantagruel; 'I know him by the tiara, the furred amice, the rochet, and the slipper.'

"'You are right,' replied the Bishop. 'It is the picture of that good God on earth, whose coming we devoutly wait, and whom we hope one day to see in this country. O happy, wished-for, and most expected day! and happy, most happy you, whose propitious stars have so far favoured you, that you have seen the living and real face of this God on earth! By the single sight of his picture we obtain full remission of all the sins which we remember, and a third part, with eighteen-fortieths besides, of the sins which we have forgotten. But, indeed, we only see it on annual holidays.'"

After church they go to dinner, when the service is performed by young girls clad in white albs with flowers in their hair. These serving-maids sing an anthem in honour of the holy Decretals, after which the excellent Bishop falls into an ecstasy over the divinely inspired book.

The good old Bishop! He is a type of the honest narrow-minded believer. He has entire faith in his nostrums. He has pictured a world all peace and tranquillity, full of good things to eat and drink, inhabited by a race of sheep-like mortals, who follow and obey, content to be well fed and well housed. The priest's idea of man has ever been as of a drove of sheep. We are to be as ignorant, as docile, as peaceful as the flock of bleating wethers; we are to have as little care as they for anything except plentiful grass, sunshine after shearing, and safety in the fold from the wolf. And the distinguishing mark of the priest in all ages, in all religions, and in all countries, is that he can never think

of himself except as a shepherd. The great Shepherd in the mind of Bishop Homenas and other prelates, priests, and monks of his creed, is not the Lord of Christendom, but the Pope of Rome.

The guests of the good Bishop proceed to tell stories which, to any but an enthusiast, would have seemed lacking in reverence towards that sacred book of the Decretals.

Ponocrates relates how a gold-beater at Montpellier used a book of Decretals to beat gold between the leaves, and how the gold-leaf was all torn and spoiled.

"Divine vengeance!" says Homenas.

Eudemon—it is a very long time since we have heard of this excellent young man—tells how an apothecary of his acquaintance turned a set of the Decretals into waste paper. Everything that he wrapped in them became corrupted and spoiled.

"Mark," said the Bishop, "an effect of divine justice!"

Carpalim remembers how a tailor of Paris cut up a set of Clementine Decretals into patterns and measures. All the coats, gowns, hoods, cloaks, cassocks, jerkins, jackets, caps, capes, doublets, or farthingales cut according to these measures were hopelessly ruined.

"Heavenly wrath!" says Homenas.

Gymnast relates that at Cahusac, a shooting-match being held, one of the leaves of a set of Decretals was set up to be shot at for the white. No one could hit the mark. Nay, it was plainly seen by some that a bolt, making straight for the centre, turned aside just before reaching it, and shot exactly seven feet four inches wide of it towards the bakehouse—Rabelais is nothing unless he can give exact particulars.

"Miracle!" cried Homenas, in a rapture,—"miracle! Come girls, wine here. Gentlemen, I perceive that you are sound Christians."

Rhizotomus has his experience with the rest, although a modest man as a rule, for he hardly speaks except on this occasion. He was once acting farces and interludes at a wedding, and to make masks, he, with his young companions, took the leaves of an old Sextum and made holes in them for the eyes and nose. Would you believe it? When they took off the masks they were all smitten with some disease. One had smallpox, one the measles, one boils, and another lost his teeth.

"Miracle!" shouted his lordship the Bishop,—"miracle!"

Presently the Bishop falls into more rapturous discourse on the catholicity of France, which sends at least 400,000 ducats a year to Rome. It is all done by the Decretals. No other book ever written could draw so much money from the country. Yet these devilish heretics refuse to acknowledge the virtue of a book which has such power.

The next adventure is the well-known and often-repeated story of the Frozen Words. The story was taken by Rabelais from the 'Cortigiano' of Castiglione. It has been reproduced in the Travels of Munchausen.

The party were all junketing, tippling, discoursing, and telling stories, when Pantagruel suddenly interrupts them by asking them whether they did not hear voices about them in the air. This was indeed the case. Nothing was to be seen, and yet they were in the midst of sounds and voices of men, women, children, and horses. Panurge, in a great fright, clings for protection to Friar John. Pantagruel refers to Aristotle and Plato, and suggests

they may be somewhere near the head and lyre of Orpheus, which was thrown into the Hebrus and floated out to sea, as far as the island of Lesbos, where the head still continued uttering doleful cries, the lyre, stirred by the wind, playing an accompaniment. He is wrong, however. It is only that they have sailed within the confines of the Frozen Sea, where a twelvemonth or so before there had been a great battle between two native tribes, and as the war took place in winter, the noise of the conflict, with the discharge of the guns, the neighing of horses, and the cries of the wounded, naturally froze, and were only now beginning to melt. This episode, like those of the great sea-monster, and the island of wind, admits of almost every kind of interpretation. It seems to me that it is simply told as an amusing story.

We come next to an island which is rugged, craggy, and barren. The voyagers land with difficulty, and with a great deal of trouble climb up the rocky sides, and find themselves, to their great surprise, when they reached the top, on a mountain so fertile, so pleasant, and so healthful, that they think they must have arrived at the Earthly Paradise.

This place is ruled by the great Gaster, First Master of Arts in the world. And here follows a most ingenious and most pleasantly worked out apologue.

Gaster, the stomach, which must be kept daily supplied, represents Necessity, the cause of all inventions, the first Master of Arts.

"We were obliged to do reverence and honour, and swear allegiance to that chivalrous king, for he is imperious, rigorous, blunt, hard, and inflexible: you cannot make him believe anything, you cannot represent anything to him, or

persuade him of anything. He does not hear: as the Egyptians said that Harpocrates, the god of silence, had no mouth, so Gaster was created without ears, like the image of Jupiter in Crete. He only speaks by signs, but those signs are more readily obeyed by every one than the statutes of prætors, or the commands of monarchs; neither will he admit the least hindrance or delay in his summons. You say that when a lion roars, all the beasts round about, as far as his roar can be heard, tremble. It is written, it is true. I have seen it. I assure you, that at Gaster's command all the heavens tremble, and all the earth shakes: his command is called, 'Do this at once, or die!'

"What company soever he is in, none dispute with him for precedence or superiority: he still goes first, though kings, emperors, or even the Pope, were there. Every one is pressed, every one labours to serve him; and in recompense, he does this good to the world, that he invents all arts, all machines, all trades, all engines, and all crafts. . . . When his regent Penia (Poverty) takes a journey, wherever she goes all parliaments are shut up, all edicts suspended, all orders are vain. She is subject to no law; she is exempt from all law. All shun her, in every place choosing rather to expose themselves to shipwreck at sea, and to pass through fire, over mountains, and across gulfs, than be seized by her.

"By the institution of nature, bread has been assigned him for provision and food, with this blessing of heaven added, that he should never want the means of procuring and keeping bread.

"At the beginning he invented the smith's art and husbandry to cultivate the ground, that it might yield him corn; he invented arms and the art of war to defend corn; medicine and astrology, with the necessary mathematics, in order to keep corn for many years in safety from the injuries of the air, destruction by beasts, and robbery of thieves; he invented watermills, windmills, handmills, and a thousand other engines to grind corn and to turn it into meal; leaven to make the dough ferment, salt to give it a flavour; fire to bake it, and clocks and dials to mark the time of its baking.

It happened that grain failed in one country; he invented the means of carrying it thither out of another country. He invented carts and waggons more commodiously to carry him; since the seas and rivers hindered his march, he invented boats, galleys, and ships to navigate sea and rivers, and from distant nations to bring corn or to convey it thither. Thieves and robbers stole from the fields the corn and bread, —he invented the art of building cities, forts, and castles, to lock it up and keep it in safety. On the other hand, finding no corn in the fields, and hearing that it was kept in castles and watched with more care than even were the golden apples of the Hesperides, he invented the art of beating down and demolishing forts and castles, battering-rams, ballistas, and catapults. And seeing that sometimes all these tools of destruction were baffled by the cunning subtilty of fortifiers, he invented cannon, field-pieces, and culverines, which hurl iron, leaden, and brazen balls, some of them outweighing huge anvils. And this he effected by means of a most dreadful powder, by whom Nature herself is amazed, and has confessed herself outdone by Art."

There are other inventions and discoveries of this great monarch, but these are due rather to Rabelais's extensive reading, and to his firm belief that classical books cannot lie, than to any practical knowledge which he had of them. For instance, Pliny's herb *ethiopis*, which opens all locks; the *remora*, which is able to stop in her course the greatest ship ever launched; that nameless herb which has the power of drawing out the heaviest wedge, however firmly planted in an oak; the dittany, which makes the arrows fall from the sides of wounded deer; the plant which will draw rain from heaven, and that which will keep the rain from falling, —of all these things we may say, as the country squire said of Gulliver, that we do not believe one word.

Rabelais, however, on the faith of Pliny, a naturalist like himself, with the enormous additional advantage of being a classic, does seem to believe these things.

Among the people of this Earthly Paradise were two sorts of folk whom Pantagruel excessively disliked. These were the Engastrimyths, who were ventriloquists, and deluded the people by pretending to be soothsayers; and the Gastrolaters, who worshipped a god consisting chiefly of head and mouth, called Manduce (*manducaré*, to chew). They were accustomed to offer banquets to this god, just as in other religions prayers and incense are offered. Rabelais pleases himself with an account of one of these banquets, or rather with giving the *menu*, which is, after the Rabelaisian fashion, in many columns, and embraces every kind of dish—flesh, fish, or fowl. It is pleasant to consider that the choice of dishes open to a *chef* of the sixteenth century were as great as those of the present day. Under the soothsayers and guzzlers we may be permitted to see once more the hood of the monk.

After leaving the land of Maitre Gaster, they were becalmed off an island called Chaneph, or Hypocrisy, where dwelt, according to Xenomanes, hypocrites, holy mountebanks, sham saints, hermits, and such—all of them living on alms.

After this they pass by the land of Thieves, where Friar John wished to land in order to make a clearance of the whole population; but Pantagruel would not allow it. The Fourth Book, which would fitly have ended with the adventure of King Gaster, concludes with a story of Panurgic cowardice.

The Fifth and last Book was, as we have seen, pub-

lished ten years after the death of Rabelais. Its authorship has been disputed. The internal evidence, however, seems to me to point with certainty to the master's hand. It may very well be that portions are not his; and it is quite clear that the whole wants the author's revision.

We have seen that the frolic, merriment, and *abandon* of the Third Book are greatly lacking in the Fourth. Yet even here Rabelais writes in cheerful, even sometimes in jovial mood. It is different with the chapters which form the Fifth Book. Here the old man is bitter and angry. The last runnings of the noble barrel are clear and sound as the first, but they have lost their sparkle. Death stared him in the face; the world looked blacker than ever; superstition was more powerful and more cruel; the extension of classical knowledge had brought as yet no alleviation of human misery; priests and monks were as rapacious, as exacting, as stupidly dogmatic as in the good old days when, at forty years of age, he burst into the world, prepared to see all mankind become suddenly as wise, as eager for common sense, as zealous for learning, as ardent for reform, as himself.

The supposed editor was a certain Jean Turquet. At the head of the Book were four lines—

> "Doth Rabelais in the dark grave lie?
> His soul still lives: he brings again
> Another book: grim fate in vain
> Cut short his days: he cannot die."

This quatrain is signed by the anagram, *Nature Quite*, in which the name of Jean Turquet is easily distinguish-

able. Henry Stephen is supposed to have assisted in the publication, but without any valid reason that one can discover.

The Book continues the voyage without any break.

On the fourth day after leaving the Isle of Thieves, land was seen. The pilot—it is remarkable that not only Xenomanes the traveller, but also the pilot, is quite familiar with these unknown seas—announces that it is the *Ile Sonnante*, or Isle of Ringing; and indeed they began to hear a confused jangling as of many bells all rung at once. Some of them suggested that it was Dodona with its caldrons, or the portico called Heptaphone in Olympia, or the eternal murmur of the Colossus raised on Memnon's tomb, or the din which used to be heard round a sepulchre at Lipara, one of the Æolian islands. Pantagruel thought that it might be the swarming of bees, the neighbours having turned out with pans, kettles, and basins to call them back. As the vessel drew nearer, they thought they could discern the singing of men. Pantagruel was of opinion, under these doubtful circumstances—it does not occur to any one to consult the pilot, who, as he knew the name of the island, would probably know something more about it—that they should first send the pinnace to a small rock whereon was a hermitage. The hermit was a certain Braguibus, a man from Poitou—it does not appear how he got there—who made them fast for four days before he would admit them upon the island. Having happily got through the four days' penance, they started with a letter of introduction to see the chief of the island, a Master Ædituus, who was old and bald, with a nose well illuminated, and a face of crimson.

But he made the whole party welcome, on the recommendation of the hermit, and gave them dinner.

The inhabitants of the island, Ædituus proceeds to tell Pantagruel, were originally *Siticines*—that is, musicians and singers at funerals—but as everything in nature is subject to change, they had become birds. When this transformation took place, they went into cages and stayed there.

"The cages were spacious, rich, and of admirable architecture. The birds were large, fair, and polite, resembling the men in my country. They ate and drank like men; they digested like men; they slept and snored like men; in short, at first sight you would have said that they were men. However, they were not men at all, as Ædituus informed us; assuring us, at the same time, that they were neither secular nor lay men: certainly their plumage puzzled us; for some were all over white, others all black, others grey, others black and white, some red, and others blue and white: it was a beautiful sight to see. The males he called *clergaux, monagaux, prestregeaux, abbegaux, evesgaux, cardingaux,* and *papegaut,* who is unique in his kind. The females he named *clergesses, monagesses, prestregesses, abbegesses, evesgesses, cardingesses, papegesses.* . . .

"We asked Maitre Ædituus, seeing the multiplication of these venerable birds in all these kinds, why there was only one *papegaut?* He replied that such was the first institution and fatal destiny of the stars; that, without marriage, of the *clergaux* were born the *prestregaux* and *monagaux.* Of the *prestregaux* were born the *evesgaux,* of these the beautiful *cardingaux,* and the *cardingaux,* unless prevented by death, ended in *papegaut.* When the *papegaut* dies, another rises in his stead out of the whole brood of *cardingaux.* So that there is in that species an individual unity with a perpetuity of succession, neither more nor less than in the Arabian phœnix.

"We then asked what moved these birds to be continually chanting and singing? He answered that it was the bells which hung on the top of their cages. Then he said to us, 'Will you have me make these *monagaux*, whom you see hooded with a bag, sing like any wood-larks?' He then rang the bell six times; and the *monagaux* began to run, and the *monagaux* began to sing. Said Panurge, 'If I ring this bell, could I make these other birds with the red-herring plumage sing?' 'Just in the same way,' returned Æditуus. Panurge rang; and suddenly these birds ran together and began to sing, but their voices were hoarse and displeasing."

It is needless, surely, to explain that the Ile Sonnante is the Church; that the cages are monasteries and convents; that the *clergaux*, *monagaux*, and the rest, are clergy, monks, priests, bishops, and cardinals; and that the bells over the cages are the chapel bells, at sound of which they rush to say the office of the hour.

"'Since,' said Pantagruel, 'you have told us how the *papegaut* is begotten of the *cardingaux*, and so on, I would gladly know whence you have the *clergaux*, from whom they all spring.'

"'They are all birds of passage,' replied Æditуus. 'They come to us from the other world—part from a marvellous country called Jour-sans-pain (Breadless-day), and part from another called Trop-d'itieux (Too-many-of-them). From these two countries flock hither, every year, these *clergaux*, leaving their fathers, mothers, friends, and relations. The way is this: When in any noble house of the latter country there are too many children, male or female, so that if the inheritance were to be divided equally among all (as reason wills, nature orders, and God commands), the house would come to nothing, the parents pack them off to this island. Generally they are hunchbacked, one-eyed, cripples, maimed, gouty, ill-shapen, and a useless burden on the earth.' 'That,'

interrupted Pantagruel, 'is a custom entirely contrary to the institutions formerly observed in the reception of the Vestal Virgins; by which, as is attested by Labeo Antistius, it was forbidden to elect to this dignity any maiden who had any defect in her soul, any diminution in her senses, any blot or blemish, however secret or slight, in her body.' 'I wonder,' said Æduus, in continuation, 'whether the mothers over there really bear their children for the customary time, seeing that they cannot endure them at home for nine years, generally not for seven, before they put on them a shirt over their frock, cut off some of their hair from their heads, with certain magic and expiatory words, and turn them into birds such as you see them here. This is doubtless the reason why the females, *clergesses*, *monagesses* and *abbegesses*, instead of singing fine and pleasant songs, such as used to be sung to Osiris, lift up dismal and angry chants as they did to the demon Arimanian, and continually curse parents and friends who transformed them into birds.'"

While they are conversing they observe a number of birds of a very different plumage. Their feathers were as changeable as the skin of the chameleon, but all of them had under the left wing a mark like a vertical line falling in a horizontal line (that is, a cross), but the mark was in different colours. These are *gourmandeurs* (a very bad pun on *commandeurs*), and though they cannot sing, they can devour. These are the knightly orders.

When they have seen all that Æduus has to show, he invites them to a four days' feast. Friar John asks whence comes the plenty and overflowing of all good things in this island, where no one sets his hand to the plough or tills the land, or does anything? "It comes," replies Æduus, "from all the other world, except some part of the northern regions, which will, ere long, have

reason to rue their refusal to continue their contributions. . . . And as for the fine time we have in this world, that is nothing compared with that we shall have in the other. The Elysian fields will be the least that can fall to our lot. Come, in the meantime, let us drink."

At midnight, when they were in bed, this worthy representative of the Church wakes them with the offer of more drink, reproaching them with sloth in the matter of drinking, and before dawn he rouses them again for an early snack. After that they made but one meal, which lasted all day.

On the third day of this continual and stupendous feed Pantagruel asked if they could not see the Papegaut himself. Æduituus, after some difficulties, conducted them in great secrecy and silence to the cage in which the Papegaut sat perched, accompanied by two little *cardingaux* and six fat *evesgaux*. Panurge, the irrepressible, likens him to a hoopoe. "Hush!" cries Æduituus, "if he once hears you blaspheming thus, you are lost. Do you see within the cage a basin? Thunder, bolts and lightning, devils and tempests, will come forth of it, by which you will be in one moment sunk a hundred feet underground." "Better drink and be merry," said Friar John. Then they return, but on their way they spy a fat old *evesgaut* sitting asleep and snoring, while near them sings unheeded a buxom *abbegesse*. Panurge takes a stone to knock the senseless bird off its perch, but Æduituus restrains him.

"Hold, my friend. Strike, murder, kill all kings and princes of the world by treason, by poison, any way you please; take down the angels from the heavens, and for all you shall have pardon of the Papegaut. But touch not

one of these sacred birds, if you love life, happiness, your relations and your friends living and dead. Even those who are born after you will suffer for it. Remember the basin.'

"'Let us rather drink, then,' said Panurge.

"'He speaks well, Master Æduituus,' said Friar John. 'While we are looking at these devils of birds we do nothing but blaspheme, but while we are emptying the bottles and the flagons we do nothing but praise the Lord. Let us then go drink.'"

And so they take leave of L'Ile Sonnante. Had there been by this time left a shadow of doubt of the hatred in which Rabelais held ecclesiastical institutions, this chapter would be enough to dissipate that doubt. The chief office of the Church is to console, fortify, and encourage the dying, and to say masses for the dead. Therefore Rabelais represents the birds to have originally been singers at funerals. Certainly in the next page he forgets this statement and assigns another origin, but that is his way. The birds in the cages, the monks and nuns, priests, bishops, cardinals, and the great Pope himself, recruited from all the world, kept well fed and fat by all the world, armed with thunder and lightning (kept in a basin), held sacred from all violence, leading lives of pure gluttony and selfish indulgence, without a hint of religion, morality, learning, or work of any kind, are the Church as Rabelais conceived it, knew it, and drew it after an experience of seventy years. Not one redeeming feature, no possibility in his mind that this dead and rotten superstition ever had or would again put forth green shoots and umbrageous branches. The world is crushed, cries the old man bitterly, by the Church. Humanity is enslaved by priests.

In three days they reach the uninhabited Island of

Tools, in which the trees bear mattocks, pickaxes, spades, sickles, scythes, swords, daggers, poniards, &c. They make no long stay here, but proceed to the Island of Play, which is sandy, barren, and unhealthy. It is also so lean that the rocks stand out of the ground like bones appearing through the skin. The pilot showed them two square rocks made of bone, which had eight equal sides. These are dice. Twenty-one devils live there. Twenty-one devils are the number of the dice ($1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 = 21$). More wrecks have happened about these square rocks, and a greater loss of body and goods, than about the Syrtes, Scylla and Charybdis, and all the gulfs and whirlpools in the world. In this island, too, is carried on a great trade with relics and consecrated rubbish. Why Rabelais should have placed the relic traffic in this island of Play does not appear. Perhaps he did not, and it may have been an addition of his editor, or a mere note of his own got into the wrong place. An island of relics and holy bones would have been amusing. They arrive next at the island of Condemnation. We have already had satires on the administration and practice of civil law. We now come to criminal justice.

The judges are called *Chats Fourrés*—Furred Cats—and they are thus described by a beggar sitting outside the court:—

"They grip all, devour all, pollute all; they burn, bury, quarter, behead, murder, imprison, waste, and ruin all without distinction of right or wrong. Among them vice is called virtue; wickedness, piety; treason, loyalty; robbery, liberality. Plunder is their motto, and when acted by them, is approved of all men, except the heretics; and they do all

this with authority, sovereign and irrefragable. . . . If ever plague, famine, war, fire, earthquakes, inundations, or other judgments befall the world, do not attribute them to the aspects and conjunctions of the planets—to the tyranny of kings—to the impostures of lying zealots of the cowl, heretics, and false prophets—to the villany of usurers, clippers, and coiners—to the ignorance, impudence, and imprudence of physicians and surgeons; but charge them, wholly and solely, to the inexpressible and incredible wickedness which is continually practised in the den of these Furred Cats."

Panurge and Friar John—Pantagruel refuses to land at this detestable port—speedily find themselves arrested and brought before the principal judge, Grippeminaud. Over his seat is the image of an old woman in spectacles, holding in her right hand the scabbard of a sickle, and in her left a balance. The scales of the balance were a pair of velvet pouches. The one was full of gold, and outweighed the other, which was empty and long. Grippeminaud bullies, swears, and rages at them. Then he asks them a riddle, and in the end he lets them go, having imposed a fine of all the gold pieces in Panurge's purse.

The riddle, the want of coherence, the absence of Rabelaisian detail in the description, the lack of merriment, the invective, all together make one believe that the chapters on the "Chats Fourrés" were not written by Rabelais at all; or at least that they are, as they stand, little else than the first rough draft, which he had no time to work up. As they stand, they read like a bad dream. We are as glad as Panurge to get out of that island and sail away, in a chapter called "How we passed beyond, and Panurge nearly got killed." In this island the people are all boon companions like leather

bottles (*outres*), who grow so fat that they are fain to cut and gash themselves, otherwise their skins would burst. In fact they all die by the bursting of the skin. There is nothing to show how Panurge was nearly killed, and the chapter has apparently no connection with anything that precedes or follows. Whether it is written by Rabelais or not, it is certainly unfinished, and probably out of place.

Just as a mighty tempest overtook the travellers before they arrived at the island of the Macreons, so they meet with another before arriving at the island of Metaphysics and Philosophy. The description of this second storm is, however, a sad falling off from that of the first.

They then make the island of the Apedefts, which is a very dull chapter of doubtful authenticity on tax-collectors and financiers.

After getting through the storm, they run ashore on some sands, from which they are released by the aid of a ship which fortunately passes by. She is laden with drums, and among the passengers is a certain astrologer named Cotiral. Being asked whom they have on board, Cotiral says that they are astrologers, fortune-tellers, alchemists, rhymers, poets, painters, projectors, mathematicians, clock-makers, and others, all subjects of Queen Quinté. He then proceeds by means of floating drums to draw off the ships from the sand, and sets them afloat again. Shortly after they arrive at the port of Matæotechny — Vain Art—in the kingdom of Queen Entelecheia (Perfection), or Quintessence, abridged into Quinté. After the formality of putting the visitors through a kind of ordeal, resembling that of the Gileadites when they slew the men of Ephraim, the Captain of

the Queen's Guard led them with great ceremony into the presence of the Queen.

Queen Quintessence (called Queen Whims by Motteux), who was then about eighteen hundred years of age, having been born in the time of Aristotle, was handsome, tall, and as fair a queen as hand could make. She was also still in the bloom and pride of youth. Just then, attended by her ladies and gentlemen, she was engaged in curing the sick; and as other kings cure scrofula by a touch, so this sovereign heals all disorders by merely playing on the organ.

"While we were examining this wonderful organ, the leprous were brought in; she played them some kind of tune, and they were immediately cured. Then those who were poisoned were had in, and she played them one song, and up they got. Then came on the deaf, the blind, and the dumb, and they received the same treatment."

The strangers were so overcome by this astonishing spectacle that they all—even Pantagruel, who up to the present point has shown no astonishment at anything, and Panurge, who has shown no reverence for anything—fall prostrate and senseless. On their recovery, the Queen addresses them in high-flown and classical language:—

"The honesty which scintillates in the circumference of your persons makes me a certain judgment of the virtue latent in the centre of your spirits: and the sight of the mellifluous suavity of your eloquent reverences, persuades me easily that your hearts nourish no kind of vice or any sterility of liberal and lofty science, but that they abound in various rare and peregrinic disciplines, which at present it is the easier, according to the usages of the vulgar imperite, to desire them to meet with; which is the reason why I, mistress

by the past over any private affection, am now unable to contain myself from uttering the trivial worldly words—'Be welcome, yea, thrice welcome.'"

As they answer nothing, the Queen concludes that they are disciples of Pythagoras. She then has them conveyed to a room, where they are nobly entertained; she herself, who eats nothing but abstractions, second intentions, transcendent prolepsies, and such other light philosophical food, dining apart.

After dinner, they observe how, with the ladies and princes of her court, the Queen is accustomed to sift time with a fine, large, blue silk sieve; and how she has revived ancient classical sports and dances. And then they are shown how the Queen's servants occupy themselves in good works: one cured toothache by the simple process of removing the stump, and letting it dry in the sun; one cured fevers by hanging a fox-tail in the left hand of the patient; one with a wonderful contrivance turned the house out of window; one cured all consumptive patients, however weak and wasted they might be, by the simple process of turning them into monks for three months; and "we were assured that if they did not grow fat and plump in the monastic state of life, they never would be fattened in this world, either by nature or by art."

The greatest benefactor, however, was he who restored to women their youth and beauty, and gave back to the most decrepit and the most wrinkled the graces and charms of sixteen. It is not stated what method he employed. Panurge asked him if he could restore old men in the same way. He could not; but it was always possible, he said, for old men to become young by one

of the newly-made young women falling in love with him.

Others of the Queen's officers made black men white by rubbing them with the bottom of a basket.

Others sheared asses, and thus got long-fleece wool.

Others gathered grapes off thorns, and figs off thistles.

Others taught cows to dance.

Others out of nothing made great things, and made great things return to nothing.

Others cut fire into steaks with a knife.

Others drew water with a fish-net.

Others on a large grass plot exactly measured how far flame can go at a hop, step, and a jump, and told us that this was exceedingly useful for the ruling of kingdoms, the conduct of armies, and the administration of commonwealths.

Two sat in a tower and guarded the moon from wolves.

In the evening they have a royal supper, and after supper there is a ball in the manner of a tournament, which is an exact description of the game of chess. And when the tournament was over, Queen Quintessence suddenly vanished away and was no more seen.

There is, so far, in the last Book, no mention of the purpose with which the voyagers had set out. The question of Panurge appears to have been entirely cast aside. But we shall find that it has not been forgotten, and that the kingdom of Entelecheia has its place. It is almost needless to explain that the island represents the absurdities of the scholastic philosophers, the waste of time over work which can have no useful result, the vain pretences of sciolists, and the vanity of false philosophy.

So they get them away from the port of Matæotechny, and make in two days the island of Roads (Odes = ὁδοί). In this remarkable place all the roads are moving. The author recognises many old friends among them—Bourges highway going with the deliberation of an abbot, the old road between Peronne and St Quentin, and so on. Pantagruel is not astonished at these things,—nothing is strange in a world where so many strange things happen. Seleucus, he reminds his companions, says that the earth itself moves round on its poles, and not the heavens at all, which we think are moving; just as, on the river Loire, we think the trees and the shore are moving, though this is only an effect of the boat's motion.

What is the meaning of the roads which move? The allegory is clumsy and far-fetched, because there can be but one meaning. The roads which carry us along by their own movement represent the wave of ideas by which we are borne along.

Next we come to the Ile des Esclots—the island of wooden clogs—where is a monastery newly founded of an order called the Humming or Mumbling Friars. There were already the Minor and the Minim Friars, and to get at a greater depth of humility, it seemed as if there could be nothing left but the Mumbling Friars. These pious brethren wore shoes as round as basins; they shaved their chins and the back part of their heads; to show that they despised fortune, they carried a razor at their waists; the flap of their cowls hung forward instead of backwards; the hind part of their heads was always uncovered, so that they could go backwards or forwards as they pleased. Their way of living was this: about owl-light they would boot and spur each other;

then, the least they could do was to sleep and snore. And when they slept they wore spectacles; and the reason was, that as the Day of Judgment is to take men unawares, they were to be always booted, spurred, and provided with their spectacles in readiness. They rose at morn; and their first exercise, after they had taken off their boots and spurs and spectacles, was to go into the cloisters and yawn altogether by signal. Then they went in procession, mumbling their psalms as they go. We need not stay to decide their mode of living and their diet, which are set forth in great detail. Every useless absurdity that can be devised is pressed into the service of this unlucky fraternity as a rule of the Order. Epistemon takes another opportunity, after learning all these rules, of inveighing against the observance of Lent.

"All distempers are sowed in Lent. It is the true seminary and native bed of all diseases. Nor does it only weaken and corrupt bodies, but also drives souls mad and uneasy. For then the devils do their best, and drive a subtle trade, and the tribe of canting hypocrites comes out of their holes. It is then term-time with them; then they hold high-day with their sessions, stations, pardons, confessions, whippings, and anathematisings. . . .

"'Is not this fellow,' Panurge asks of Brother Fredon-fredonnant-fredondille, who had overheard Epistemon, 'a rank heretic?'"

The worthy brother answers only in monosyllables:—

"'Much.'

"'Ought he not to be burned?'

"'Ought.'

"'And as much as possible?'

"'Yes.'

"'Without any parboiling?'
"'None.'
"'How should he be roasted?'
"'Alive.'
"'Till at last he be?'
"'Dead.'
"'What has he made you?'
"'Mad.'
"'What do you take him to be?'
"'Fool.'
"'First, how would you have him served?'
"'Burned.'
"'Some have been served so?'
"'Many.'
"'And the number of those who are to be warmed thus hereafter is?'
"'Great.'
"'How many of them do you intend to save?'
"'None.'
"'So you would have them all burned?'
"'All.'"

We arrive next at the last station but one before we come to Lantern Land. It is the island of Satin, a most delightful and charming country, where everything is found which only exists in fable, fiction, and poetry. There the travellers found unicorns, the golden fleece, the chameleon which lives on air, three hydras, fourteen phœnixes, the skin of Apuleius's golden ass, centaurs, the remora which stops the course of ships, sphinxes, creatures with fore-feet like hands and hind feet like men's feet; "leucrocutes," which have necks, tails, and breasts like a lion, legs like a stag, the mouth up to the ears, with two teeth, one above and one below. These are creatures which speak with human voices, and when

they do they say nothing: there are also many other curious and interesting animals.

A little higher up is the country of Tapestry, where they see unheard-of splendours—Triton winding his silver shell instead of a horn, and also Glaucus, Proteus, Nereus, and a thousand other gods and sea-monsters. They take everything to be real, so artfully constructed is the tapestry. And then they come across a most remarkable tribe of people. These are gathered round an old man, diminutive and monstrous, called Hearsay. His mouth was slit up to his ears, and in it were seven tongues, each of them cleft into seven parts. And he was chattering and talking with the whole seven at once. He had as many ears all over his body as Argus had eyes, and was as blind as a mole, and palsied in the legs.

"About him stood an innumerable number of men and women, gaping, listening, and hearing very intently, and among them I saw one who held a map of the world and explained everything summarily and in short aphorisms, so that they all grew learned in a trice, and would most talk of a world of prodigious things, the hundredth part of which would take up more than a man's whole life to learn.

"Among the rest, of the Pyramids, of the Nile, of Babylon, of the Troglodytes, of the pigmies, of the cannibals, of the Hyperborean mountains, of all the devils, and everything by hearsay."

Leaving the island of Hearsay and of Tradition, they steer over straight for Lantern Land, the land of light and truth.

Before we arrive there and learn the oracle of the Bottle, let us briefly recapitulate the principal events of this remarkable voyage. We must remember, first, what

it was they were in search of. An idle doubt, the vagary of a busy, restless mind, suggests the first inquiry, "Shall Panurge be married?" What answer is given by the oracles, the astrologers, the wise men, the witches, whom he consults? None. Is there, then, no voice from the unseen world which directs the course of men? No narrower issue than this is present to the mind of Pantagruel. In search of an answer, he leads his followers on this long voyage among undiscovered islands. We see the island of Pretence and Ostentation; the island of Lip-service and Hollow Politeness; the islands of Confusion and Desolation, where war has lately been; the island of the Long-lived, where in dark forests, among the ruins of the ancient temples, dwell the great men of old; the island of Tapinois, where Quaresme-prenant is described, with the follies of Lent; the island of the Chitterlings; that of Smoke and Windy Doctrine; that of Pope-fig-land; that of Papimanie; the country of great King Gaster, the Ile Sonnante, the islands of Tools, of Gambling, of the Furred Cats, of the Tax-farmers, of Queen Entelecheia, of Roads, of Sabots, of Mumbling Friars, and of Legendary Animals and Things. We have made the acquaintance of certain persons whom we shall not easily forget—Quaresme-prenant, Bishop Homenas, Gaster, Ædituus, Grippeminaud, and Queen Entelecheia. We have seen the development of the principal characters in the book—Pantagruel, Panurge, and Friar John—and we have learned a great deal. We are prepared for the oracle, whatever it may be, by the warnings we have received and the lessons which our adventurers have taught us. It is a vain thing to look for advice, aid, or information

from magic, divination, sorcery, or astrology. If we want to find truth we must ourselves search for it. Armed with store of the herb Pantagruelion, which means courage, patience, and hope, we must aim at simplicity, avoiding pretence, conceit, affectation. The justice of the world is generally chicanery; its wars are due to ambition; vain and idolatrous are the superstitions of the Roman Catholics, who ignorantly adore the Pope; stupid, useless, and mischievous are the religious orders, with their rules which mean nothing, their ignorance, their gluttony, and their licentious lives. The justice of the world is often administered by cruel and rapacious judges, scholastic subtilties, men childish, and lead to no result. If, then, there is in the world no religion, no justice, no truth, no honesty, nothing real, nothing what it pretends to be, what remains for men? So far, there is nothing, but to lay in good store of Pantagruelion, that potent herb, and to hope for the oracle of the Divine Bottle.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ORACLE OF THE BOTTLE.

THE Divine Bottle is within its temple, which occupies one of the islands of Lantern Land, a country whose inhabitants consist entirely of lanterns, lamps, cressets, and candlesticks. The travellers were fortunate in arriving at the time when the Lanterns were holding their provincial chapter. They were introduced to the Queen by two Lanterns of honour—namely, those of Aristophanes and of Cleanthes. Panurge, the great linguist, set forth briefly to the Queen, in Lantern language, the causes of their visit. Her Majesty was clothed in virgin glass, the Lanterns of the blood-royal in imitation diamonds, transparent stones, horn, paper, and oiled cloth. The Cressets were dressed in like manner, according to the antiquity of their houses. Among them, and occupying a distinguished place, were the Lanterns of Epictetus and Martial. At supper they were all sumptuously regaled with great candles, the Queen alone having a wax candle. The next day the Queen gave them the choice among the most illustrious lanterns for a guide.

The idea of Lantern Land is taken from Lucian; but

its meaning is obvious. We are in the land of light, where truth will be made manifest to us.

It is not without endless ceremonies and precautions that the party are initiated into the mysteries of the Dive Bouteille. Preceded by the Lantern which guides them, they first pass through a vast vineyard, in which are all sorts of vines, bearing fruit, flowers, and leaves all the year round. Then they were ordered to eat, every man, three grapes, to put vine-leaves in their shoes, and to take a green vine-branch in their left hands. At the end of the vineyard was an arch, on which was sculptured the trophy of a drinker, consisting of all kinds of drinking-glasses, and everything that stimulates thirst, such as hams, tongues, cheese. The arch opened into a covered way, whose roof was formed by the interlaced branches of vines loaded with clusters of different colours, and ending in three ivy-trees, the leaves of which they were directed to gather and make into "Albanian" hats—that is, a kind of turban.

Then they went through an underground vault, the walls of which were coarsely painted with a dance of women and satyrs, which reminded Rabelais, who now himself formed one of the party, of the "painted cave" at Chinon. The cave remains to this day, deeply quarried in the yellow stone of the great rock behind the town, but there are no traces of any painting.

Here they were challenged by the Grand Flask, governor of the Divine Bottle, accompanied by a troop of temple-guards, all being French bottles. Seeing that the party were crowned with ivy and carried the thyrsus, and were conducted by the illustrious Lantern, he gave orders that they should be led to the Priestess Bacbuc,

Lady of Honour to the Bottle and Pontiff of all the mysteries. They continue to descend; the way is long; there is no light but that given by the Lantern; Panurge falls into a deadly fear, and entreats to be taken back; Friar John and the Lantern reassure him. After a hundred and eight steps—the number is symbolic—of the dark staircase, they come to a portal of fine jasper, on the face of which was written, in letters of gold, *ἐν οἴνῳ ἀλήθεια—in wine is truth.* The two doors were of Corinthian brass, curiously wrought. Here the Lantern informed them that she could go no further, advised them to obey the injunctions of the Priestess Bacbuc, to keep their heads, to have no fear, and to trust her for their return. She then opened the gates, which proved to be covered on the inside with steel, and to move backwards and forwards by the power of two loadstones, on one of which was written—

"Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt."
The fates lead the willing and drag the unwilling.

and on the other—

"Toutes choses se meuvent en leur fin."
All things move towards their end.

They entered the temple, the pavement, roof, and walls of which are all most curiously adorned with mosaic-work. On the floor were represented flowers, grapes, vine-branches, snails, and little lizards, so true to life that they could not forbear walking carefully for fear of getting their feet entangled. The work on the walls represented the army of Bacchus, with his mænads and satyrs, who were commanded by Silenus and Pan. After

the representation of his army came that of the battle in which the god destroyed the Indian army; and finally his triumph, with, at the far end, a prospect of the land of Egypt.

The temple was illuminated by a wonderful lamp, the description of which occupies a chapter. Under the lamp was a fair "fantastic" fountain, at which they were met by the Priestess Bacbuc herself with joyous and laughing face, and accompanied by her suite. The fountain was constructed of pure alabaster, about two and a half feet high, being on the outside a regular heptagon, and within a perfect circle. On each side was placed a pillar, whose disposition and height signified the approximate proportion of the circumference to the diameter of a circle. The pillars were of those precious stones assigned by the Chaldeans to the seven planets—sapphire, hyacinth, diamond, ruby, emerald, agate, and syenite. Upon them stood images of Saturn, in lead; of Jupiter, in brass; of Phœbus, in gold; of Mars, in Corinthian brass; of Venus, in copper; of Mercury, in fixed quicksilver; and of Luna, in silver. Above these pillars rose a cupola, within which were figured the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twelve months of the year, the two equinoxes, the ecliptic line, and the fixed stars about the antarctic pole.

They are invited to drink of this fountain, and find that its waters taste of any kind of wine which they fancy—hence it is called the Fantastic Fountain.

Then Bacbuc, taking Panurge, who desired the oracle of the Bottle, dressed him and prepared him for the sacred rite. He was attired in a gaberdine, his head wrapped round with a hood, gloves were put upon him, he was tied round with three bagpipes, his face dipped

three times in the fountain, he was sprinkled with flour, he was muffled with a filter, and three cock's feathers were fixed in it. Thus accoutred, he was made to jump three times, to sit upon the ground seven times, while Bacbuc read strange conjurations in the Etruscan tongue from a book of ritual which one of her mystagogues carried for her.

Then she led him by the right hand through a golden gate out of the temple, and into a round chapel built of transparent stone, and of richer workmanship than even that chapel built by Theodoric at Ravenna. Within it was another heptagonal fountain, in the midst of which stood the Divine Bottle. It was of oval shape, all of pure, fine crystal.

And then they sang the song of invocation.

The translation subjoined is not much more rough than the original.

"Bottle divine,
O'ercharged and full
With fate and fear:
I here incline
One ear too dull
Thy voice to hear.
My heart hangs now on thee:
Thy heavenly liquor, fair to see,
By the great victor-God's decree
The fates and future holds contained.
O wine divine, far, far from thee enchained
Are falsehoods, lies, pretence, and fond deceits;
Blessed has the soul of Noah since remained,
Because he made us sinners know thy sweets.
The answer give whereat all doubt retreats.
So may no drop, or white or red,
Of thee be wasted, lost, or shed.

Bottle divine
O'ercharged and full
With fate and fear:
I here incline
One ear too dull
Thy voice to hear."

This finished, Bacbuc threw something into the fountain which caused the water to boil violently. Panurge listened with his one ear in silence. Bacbuc was on her knees. Presently from the bottle issued a noise such as that of a swarm of young bees, or as that of a bolt from an arbalist, or that of a sudden shower. And then was heard from the bottle the word "TRINCQ."

"'The bottle is broken,' cried Panurge, in amazement 'or it is cracked, at least.'

"Then Bacbuc arose and took Panurge gently by the arm, saying to him, 'Friend, render thanks to heaven, as reason obliges you. Now have you promptly heard the word of the Divine Bottle. I say, the word, more joyous, more divine, more certain than any that I have heard since first I began to minister at this most sacred oracle. Rise and let us go to the Chapter, where we shall find the interpretation of this fair word.'

"'Let us go,' said Panurge, 'in the name of God. I am as wise as I was last year.'"

The Chapter is a flask, of which Panurge drinks, and straightway falls into a Bacchic madness, in which Friar John joins him out of sympathy, and they rhyme in mad verse, Panurge still thinking of his original perplexity. Then the priestess dismisses them.

"Here below, in these circumcentral regions, we establish as the sovereign good not to take and receive, but to impart and give; and we reckon ourselves happy, not if we take

much of others' goods, but if we are always imparting and giving of our own to others. . . . Go, friends, in the protection of that intellectual sphere of which the centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere, which we call God. And when you go back to your own country, bear testimony that under ground are all great treasures and admirable things. . . . All philosophers and ancient sages, the more surely and pleasantly to accomplish the road of divine knowledge and the pursuit of wisdom, have esteemed two things necessary—the guidance of God, and the friendship of men. Now go, in the name of God; and may He be your guide!"

This is the end of the Book, and these are the last words of the Oracle of the Bottle.

What does it mean? Panurge said, at the end of it, that he was no wiser than before. No answer has been given to his question, if he is to marry or no. None has been given to that far wider question which fills the mind of Pantagruel, whether there is, or ever has been, any voice from the world beyond the grave. The great, wise prince has tried every mode of divination, has consulted every oracle, has quoted every classical author, has conversed with every priest who pretends to supernatural power. He finds nothing but silence, pretence, and hypocrisy. Everywhere in the world, in the motion of the planets, in the wondrous mechanism of the body, he finds the work of the divine hand, the design of the divine mind; but to all his prayers, all his cries, all his yearnings, there is silence. The truest wisdom is in the "divine word" of the Bottle—drink.

The meaning of the oracle, as expounded by the priestess, seems plain. In it we see the creed of Rabelais. He differed from the theologians and the speculative

scholars of his time in two most important respects. He did not, like Calvin, Luther, and Roussel, take his stand upon the New Testament. He did not, like Dolet and Desperiers, take Cicero for an evangel. He was, in the first place and before all, a student of Nature, a man of science; and, in the second, a scholar. The Gospel was associated in his mind with the degradation of the cloister; it belonged to monkery. When he emerged, he left it behind him in the stern religious light of the monastery chapel, and never cared to look at it again. He built up his own religion for himself. God is everywhere: this man's mind was filled with the omnipresence, the perfection, the order, the benevolence of God. Not only in times of danger, but as an act of daily duty, does his wise prince supplicate and revere God the Creator; while in the harmony of the stars, and in the admirable mechanism of the body, Rabelais, astronomer, physicist, and anatomist, saw not only a physical order of which human intellect can grasp only portions, but he deduced also, by analogy, the laws which should govern societies and individuals. The conduct of life should be ruled, had we the knowledge, in strict accordance with the laws of nature. It is man's first duty to acquire knowledge, to give and impart knowledge, like the inhabitants of Lantern Land: there is nothing in all the world worth having but knowledge, and especially physical science. Let every man possess his soul with cheerfulness; let him eat; let him drink; let him enjoy the golden sunshine and the purple wine; let him sing, laugh, and talk with his fellows; let him exhort and be exhorted continually to study, to the practice of research, to patience, and to charity; let him have faith

in the Divine Creator. Live according to the laws of the world. Nature laughs. God rules in sunshine.

And about the soul? and about a future world? Go ask your oracles, says Rabelais, and see what answer they will give. But the good God, who has created this wondrous cosmos, who gives us His continual grace to make us love learning and each other, reigns. Let us trust Him, because there is none other that fighteth for us.

Attempts have been made to prove that Rabelais was a Christian. To suppose this is, in my mind, not only seriously to misunderstand the spirit of his book, but that of his time. The scholars of France at this period, the men with whom he associated, were Christians only in name, and when no danger of martyrdom appeared imminent. Let us again insist that Rabelais came out of his cloister at forty. While the great Revolt was slowly preparing in men's minds, he had remained untouched by any of the influences which brought about religious change; or, if touched at all, then individually and separately, as one who rediscovers in his cell something of what has already been discovered and made known in the outer world. He came, a Frenchman of forty and a stranger, into France, whose religion was tottering, whose educational methods were superannuated, whose doctors, advocates, and preachers were pedantic, whose judges were corrupt, and whose ignorance was enormous. He came as a stranger and outsider, and looked on everything as those who had been brought up in the midst of this state of things could not look. Though from time to time he might be drawn in the direction of Geneva, it was but a momentary temptation. The only Christianity, unfortunately, which he knew, was that of the monastery: he could not but know that

there is nowhere, whether in history or in the Book on which Christianity rests, the least foundation for the sacerdotal pretensions and superstitious structures which he confused with the religion of Christ. He ceased to vex his soul about the rival schools. He created a new religion for himself, the religion which in his time a man of science might be expected to create.

Trust in the Lord of all power, the eternal Father, the Creator, the Architect of the world, whose benevolence is shown by His works. Trust in Him, work out your own life for the good of others, enjoy and be happy, as becomes a grateful mortal. That seems to me the creed, that the secret, that the key to Rabelais. After all, it is the practical creed of every Frenchman of the present day, save those unfortunates whose mothers clap a shirt over their little frocks, cut a round place in their hair, and mumble certain incantations over their unhappy heads, which turn the poor children into *monagaux*, *clergaux*, *evesgaux*, or *cardingaux*, to live in a cage, sing when the bell rings, and pretend to conjure.

It is impossible to avoid a comparison, in the matter of religion, between Lucretius and Rabelais. Both were profoundly impressed with the order and magnificence of creation, both were deeply indignant with the religious abuses of the day—

"Tantum religio possit suadere malorum!"

Both had the same thing to offer in its place—physical science. But Rabelais superadds the trust and faith in the Creator which was wanting in Lucretius. Both, at an interval of fifteen hundred years, anticipated the nineteenth century in its restless discontent of old beliefs, its fearless questioning, its advocacy of scientific research.

It has been found impossible in this short volume to trace the sources of the Rabelaisian stories. The Master, like Molière and like Shakespeare, gets his materials wherever he can: he seldom invents. Why, indeed, should he invent? He had those works of the ancients which, to the people for whom he wrote, were sealed books; he could draw upon these as much as he pleased. There were Lucian, Plutarch, and Aristophanes, treasuries for illustration, suggestion, and imitation; there were Plato, Virgil, Horace, Martial, and Seneca to furnish him with quotation; there were Italians like Cortigiano, Boccacio, and Folengo; there were Pierre Pathelin, Villon, and the rest of his countrymen of the fifteenth century. The sources of apologue, story, and illustration belong to such a critical edition of Rabelais as it is to be hoped some Englishman may yet be found to give to the world. But he must give ten years to the task. It is not too much to say that Rabelais has never yet been "edited" at all.

He wrote for the people; he wrote so that in parts scholars only should be able to read between the lines. Panurge, for instance, saw nothing in the response of the Bottle but an injunction to drink. Let those who are worthy learn the true meaning of the oracle. But he wrote in a glorious hope and confidence that the number of those who would read with understanding was increasing day by day. He hoped and had faith in the future of the world. He believed in the development and growth of man. We, of little faith, who have reached levels of liberty far higher than any Rabelais dreamed of, who tremble at the signs of any little impending reaction, may think of what the world was in his time, of what it is now, and take hope again with

shame and abasement. Is it not a good thing to be strong of heart?

It cannot be doubted that the main idea in the mind of Rabelais, to show, by the new light of recently discovered learning, what the world could be made, is obscured by his method of treatment. No doubt an allegory penetrates and is understood, where a treatise would not be intelligible. But the allegory winds and turns with so many digressions, and with so little apparent sequence, until we come to the famous Voyage, that it is difficult always to follow the thread. Nor do I think that at the beginning, in the First Book of "Pantagruel," he designed more than a running satire on certain institutions. And the whole breadth of his purpose is not fully apparent until the Third Book. It is true, also, that a treatise developing his ideas directly would have led him most certainly, whither he had the greatest reluctance to go, to the stake. Therefore he readily accepted the disguise of parable. Further, to make this parable the more agreeable to all classes of men, he stuffed it full of all manner of jests, buffooneries, and things which it was a shame for so wise a man to write. There is no excuse for the great sin of Rabelais. To speak of the taste of the age is nonsense. In no age, however corrupt, have the highest minds consented to make men of low tastes laugh. Erasmus, for instance, was his contemporary, and Erasmus may be almost read in a boy's school. But Rabelais liked buffoonery. He acted in a farce at fifty, after he had been lecturing and publicly demonstrating in his university. His love of buffoonery is a charge brought against him as an undoubted fact by his contemporaries—not one of those traditions, like

those attaching to his life and death, which grew up in the course of years. When he died, Ronsard and Du Bellay, worshippers of form and pedants in words, brought separately against the dead man the only charge open to them, that he was fond of wine, feasting, and mirth. "Laugh," says Joachim du Bellay, "if you wish to please my soul."

His ready wit, his extraordinary good spirits, his delight in the society of other men, laid him open, no doubt, to the accusation of buffoonery and gluttony. To those of us who would be blind to his faults, he is that rarest of human beings—a man who has deeply studied, who is perpetually thinking over, the problems of life and death, birth, growth, and decay; who perceives the many disappointments inevitable at every step of civilisation; who feels the silence of the universe; who ardently desires fuller knowledge, more light,—and yet who maintains to the end of life the cheerfulness and the hope of youth. There is no malice in the old man at the close of his long life, save when he speaks of those monks and priests who alone hindered the realisation of his dream, as they still hinder it. If the soul of Rabelais is permitted to watch the course of events, he must be sad at heart, and growing daily more sad, to mark how, while the centuries roll on, the falsities over which his soul grew angry know no abatement, and continue to produce their poisonous fruit for the destruction of the human race.

In Pantagruel we have the type of the wise, calm, and courageous king. He is terrified by no storms, he is equal to all emergencies, he is moved by no unworthy passions of ambition and conquest. It is good when such a king can be produced by education, that a country

should be ruled by a sovereign. The courtiers of the king, Epistemon, Eusthenes, and the rest, are the type, as their names denote, of Wisdom, Strength, Patience, and Dexterity. He has no priest about him at all, and does not feel the want of a priest. With him are two followers who represent the lower forms of human nature. Friar John is ignorant, courageous, and full of animalism. Although a monk, he has no piety, learning, or industry. He is a good man spoiled by the indulgence of animal instincts and obedience to profitless rule. The other, Panurge, is, I believe, the careful portrait of a man without a soul. He is full of cleverness and learning. He is full of wit and intelligence. But he has no soul. That part of humanity which gives sympathy, generosity, dignity, nobility, is deficient in him. He is an animal, but a reasoning animal. He is what a monkey might be, could a monkey be so trained. To him, as to Friar John, the oracle of the Divine Bottle conveys nothing beyond the simple meaning of the word—"drink."

Each of his minor characters has got a small but well-defined part to play. The good Bishop Homenas, worshipper of the Pope, is the type of the old-fashioned ignorant priest. Judge Bridlegoose illustrates the uncertainty of the law, since his decisions, pronounced entirely by chance, have given universal satisfaction. Ponocrates, who comes from Laugh-at-the-Pope Land, is the type and model of a wise tutor; and so on with all the rest.

In the education of Gargantua we have a scheme of education which has never been equalled, and which is far before our own time, as it was far before the time of Rabelais. But as solitary education is not desirable, he gives us the plan of his Abbey of Thelema, in which

courtesy and gentlehood are the only laws, and honourable love the natural end of the association of young men and maidens. In the wars with Picrochole and Anarchus, Rabelais insists on discipline and good order when as yet there was no discipline, as we understand it, in any army save that recently introduced by Coligny. He shows how Necessity is the greatest of all benefactors of the human race; he keeps constantly before his readers the wondrous order of the universe, and teaches how men, societies, and nations should imitate the mutual dependence of every part of creation; he sings the praises of fortitude, patience, and industry under the allegory of the herb Pantagruelion; he speaks with the rapture of a prophet of the delight of study.

All this, and more, he taught, and was the first to teach. But, one hears, he is a buffoon—he is always mocking, and always laughing. That is perfectly true. He laughs at the pretensions of Pope, cardinal, bishop, and priest; he laughs at monkery and monks; he mocks at the perpetual iteration of litanies; he laughs at the ignorance and superstitions which he thinks are about to vanish before the new day of modern learning; he laughs at the ambition of kings who dream of universal conquest; he laughs at the *Chats Fourrés*, the Furred Cats of the law; he laughs at the false eloquence of doctors, and the sham learning of advocates; he laughs at the impotent attempts of Ronsard and his followers to change suddenly the noble language of France.

If to laugh at things mischievous or foolish is to be condemned, then let us condemn Rabelais. He does not laugh at religion, as he conceived religion; or at kings, as kings might be; or at physicians, who were like unto

himself rather than unto Nostradamus, the predicter; or at any good thing, or valuable institution.

There are three things in Rabelais to be deplored or condemned. The first has been already sufficiently alluded to. The second is, that there are no women in the book. From the force of long habit, from his thirty years of the cloister, he looked on life entirely from the man's point of view. No women at all, except poor Badebec, the priestess Bacbuc, a hag or two, and Queen Entelecheia. Yet in the Abbey of Thelema he shows that he could form a right conception of the part which women should take in that fuller life of which he there dreamed.

The third and most deplorable of all is the effect which his book produced upon the prospects of the Reformation in France. It was at that time all important that, as in England, the scholars should range themselves on the Protestant side. Rabelais refused to do this. More, he set an example which deterred other scholars, and kept them, in sheer impatience, in the enemy's camp. Had that assemblage of scholars which met together in banquet after the acquittal of Dolet gone boldly over to the camp of Geneva, and drawn with them the nobler spirits of the Sorbonne, the wavering king would have hesitated no longer; France might have followed the example of England, and created a Gallican Church in which, as here, freedom of thought and utterance might slowly win its way.

One last word on the style of Rabelais. He was a child of the people, coming from that part of France where the language is the purest and most copious. He used that language as no other French writer has been

able to use it, showing what a copious, flexible, and delicate instrument it is. He is not a conscious artist; he is careless of form; he often allows most excellent situations to be, so to speak, wasted; he repeats his ideas when he can improve them; his imagination sees clearly, with absolute distinctness, down to every detail, what he describes; he is more careful than even Victor Hugo himself to describe exactly; he heightens the vividness of his pictures by the enumeration of every detail, sparing us none; and he is always cheerful, with a spontaneous gaiety of soul, for ever bubbling up like a full spring upon a hillside. More than this, he is always *sensible*, and he is always full of hope.

Cheerful, light-hearted, full of good sense, of faith, hope, and charity, an advocate of all good things, an enemy of all hypocrisies; and yet he has written so that those who read him have to show a reason why they read him, so that those who praise him have to explain why they praise him, so that no woman can ever read him, and so that priests have just cause to condemn him, independently of his derision and mockery of their pretensions. The pity of it!

END OF RABELAIS.

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